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GARDENS
ILLUSTRATED

Plant now for spring

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CLASS 369
EXHIBITER No. 48
WILTSHIRE COUNTRY VEGETABLE COMPETITION
1st PRIZE
WILTSHIRE COUNTRY VEGETABLE COMPETITION
SHOULD'VE GONE TO
Specsavers

editor's letter

As I cycle into work, I pass several roundabouts – one is the ubiquitous eye-watering clash of bedding plants, while another, planted by designer Noël Kingsbury, is a beautiful tapestry of long-season perennials. I also have to dodge a number of bumps and potholes in the road. Therefore, I was fascinated to hear about artist Steve Wheen, the so-called 'Pothole Gardener', who creates miniature garden scenes from cracks in the road. Steve kindly agreed to come to Bristol to replicate this month's cover shot on a road close to our offices and you can see the results on page 66. You'll also find a link to our first behind-the-scenes video, showing how the garden was built. This issue we have lots of seasonal inspiration, including the vibrant planting at Ulting Wick in Essex, an ongoing experiment in perennials at Noël Kingsbury's private garden in Herefordshire, nurseryman John Hoyland's insights into the best Japanese anemones and plant expert Chris Marchant's selection of nine plants that look particularly stunning this month. October is the time to plant spring-flowering bulbs, so we asked gardener and plant expert Helen Dillon to devise five stunning combinations to guarantee success early next year (see page 76). I hope you enjoy the issue,

Juliet

GARDENS
ILLUSTRATED
Plant now for spring
AUTUMN FLOWERS

You can get the latest editions of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED as a digital version to view on your iPad. Available via the App Store.

Juliet chats with the Pothole Gardener as he recreates our cover – in miniature. See page 66.

The owners of Ulting Wick prove that autumn can be glorious, on page 34.

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Plantsman and head gardener at Great Dixter in East Sussex.

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JASON INGRAM, MARIANNE MAJERUS

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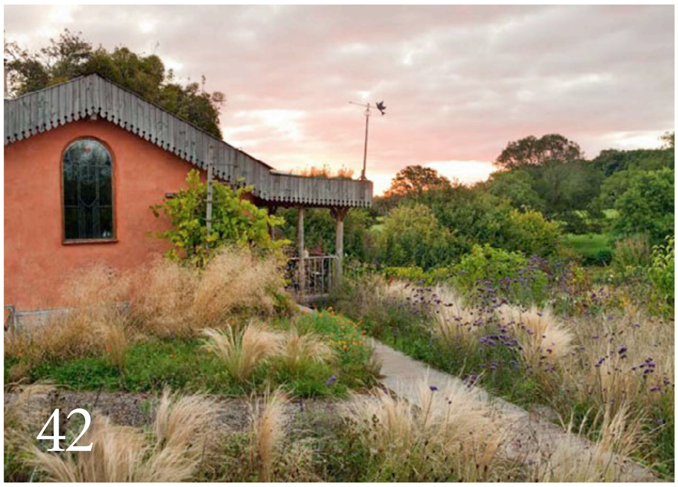

COVER IMAGE

The farmyard garden at Ulting Wick. Photo by Marianne Majerus. **See feature on page 34.**

on the cover

AUTUMN FLOWERS Don't let the darkening skies influence your colour choices. Autumn can be glorious too – take inspiration on pages **20**, **34**, **42**, **48** and **58**

PLANT NOW FOR SPRING Ensure beautiful displays early next year with these perfect planting combinations – page **76**

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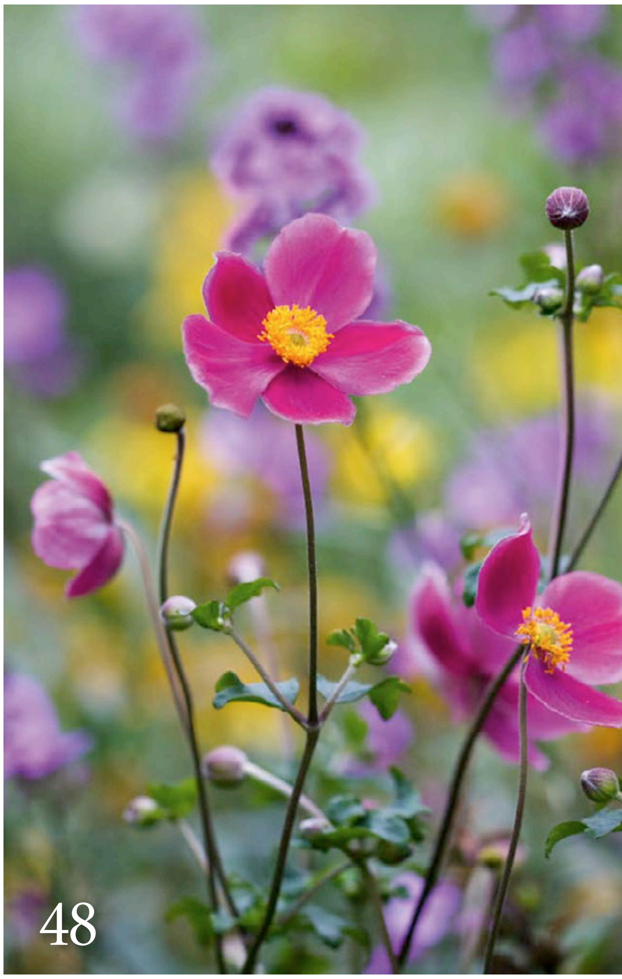

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- Subscribe today and get 12 issues for the price of eight* – see page 32
- Reader offers: 25% discount on exclusive bulb collections from Avon Bulbs plus Japanese anemones offer – see page 100

* Offer applies to UK customers only.

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contributors

LEIGH CLAPP

A garden photographer for 20 years, Leigh delights in discovering the tiny elements to a garden's overall essence and meeting lots of enthusiastic gardeners along the way. She visits a Surrey garden designed by Nic Howard on page 58.

"The memory of the shoot was one of movement, with every breath of wind translated to a textural meld of muted tones."

JANE SEBIRE

HELEN DILLON

Helen is a plantswoman and writer. She is the author of several books including *Helen Dillon's Garden Book* (Frances Lincoln, 2011). She lives in Dublin and her garden is open to the public. In this issue she looks at spring planting combinations (page 76).

"Spring is the time to see some wonderful colour combinations, from pristine greens and whites to exciting orange and purple."

LIA LEENDERTZ

Allotmenteer Lia contributes to newspapers (*The Guardian* and *The Telegraph*) as well as blogging at lialeendertz.wordpress.com and writing books – the latest is *Twilight Garden* (Anova Portico, 2011). This issue she visits the fabulous West Dean (page 70).

"I was struck by the care lavished on the walled garden. It must be akin to visiting one during their Victorian heyday."

JODIE JONES

Writer and former GARDENS ILLUSTRATED Deputy Editor Jodie relishes opportunities to visit gardens and talk to gardeners. But rarely do they offer the prospect of such instant results as the stunning 12-month-old garden in Sussex featured on page 58.

"Designer Nic Howard has achieved the almost impossible – a garden makeover that looks like it has been there for decades."

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letters

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Star letter

Investing in gardens

'Gardening must be taken more seriously as a career if we're to fill the UK's 'green skills' gap.' James Alexander-Sinclair in Talking Point, September issue (page 8).

Having just embarked on a career in gardening, I am studying for the first of the horticultural qualifications I plan to gain, while also working as a volunteer gardener in an established eight-acre historical garden, to gain practical experience. However, I was shocked to find out how little highly skilled gardeners are paid. If we don't sufficiently reward these people for their efforts, where is the incentive for our educated young people? Gardening is a career change that, at the age of 50, I now feel I'm in a position to pursue, but at 18 I certainly wouldn't have considered it an affordable career choice. Both the horticultural industry and the government absolutely have a huge task ahead of them in changing the perception of gardening as being solely the preserve of those who are non-academic and unskilled. However, if they want to encourage bright and enthusiastic young people to enter the profession, there must be a concerted effort to make it not only attractive, but also financially viable.

Sheila Goggs, by email

SHOW ENTRY

Scarecrow surprise

I had to laugh when I came across a picture of my flower show entry for last year's Flower Show at the Port Eliot Festival in your news section in July (page 14). My scarecrow chap was sporting a rather fabulous afro made of *Ceanothus* and a mossy beard. I thought I'd give you a laugh by showing you a photo of this year's entry (they get more extravagant by the year). My partner and I made the Walrus and the Carpenter as the theme was Cabbages and Queens. The carpenter was even awarded a highly commended. The Flower Show was inspiring and original as always and there were some truly brilliant entries this year.

Lisa Page, Cornwall

READER REACTION

Weed steaming

Your magazine recently mentioned that heat or steam can be as effective at weed control as chemicals (August issue, page 13). I have a roughly one-acre, National Garden Scheme garden to maintain. I looked around for a commercially manufactured electric weed scorcher without being able to find one, and so fashioned one from an old and very cheap 1400 Watt hot air paint stripper lashed to an old aluminium handle hoe.

Since then I have managed all lawn/border edges using this simple tool, as well as our terrace slabs. It's simple, if a bit labour-intensive on cobbled paths – the key is to avoid overcooking the weeds, and just quickly pass over them. For many tasks it is a near zero cost, back-saving and chemical-free approach.

Julian Wormald, Llandeilo

ELIZABETH STRANGMAN: AN APOLOGY

In Noël Kingsbury's feature on De Hessenhof (September issue) he referred to 'the late Elizabeth Strangman'. This was of course an error – Elizabeth Strangman is alive and well and retains her passion for spring-flowering woodland plants. Our sincere apologies.

WRITE TO US & WIN

The star letter wins a pair of Tobisho secateurs, worth £62. These award-winning Japanese pruners are hand-forged out of high-quality steel. For details visit www.niwaki.com

TALKING POINT

Annie Gatti considers the effects of pesticides on the UK's population of pollinating insects

There's more troubling news about pesticides.

This time it's wild bees that visit oilseed rape fields grown from seeds coated with neonicotinoid chemicals. Residues of the chemicals, it seems, remain in the pollen and nectar, which the bees ingest. As a result they become disorientated and can't find their way home. There are also up to 85 per cent fewer queens produced. Wild bees and other native insects pollinate two-thirds of our crops, and gardeners who use foliar pesticides should be especially careful about not spraying on or near any flowers. Or better still only use natural deterrents. DEFRA says that current neonicotinoid insecticides meet the regulatory safety standards. Friends of the Earth disagree and are calling for the immediate suspension of neonicotinoids.

For a list of garden pesticides that contain neonicotinoids see **www.pan-uk.org**

Bees are at risk from neonicotinoids.

Annie Gatti is a journalist focusing on horticulture, writing regularly for *The Guardian* and *The Times*.

- What's your view? Write to us by post or email (details above). We reserve the right to edit letters.

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Each break has a similar pattern, starting with a lunch together on the Friday and finishing late afternoon on the Sunday with two nights' accommodation, all meals and travel included.

For this first year we have chosen three quintessential garden locations: East Anglia (May), the Upper Cotswolds (June) and the Heart of Sussex (July).

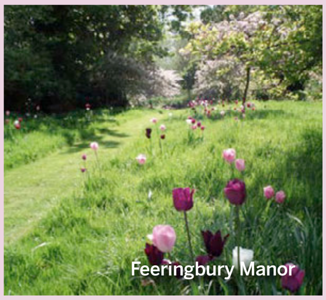
Special offer

Book more than one Ring o'Roses break within the same year and we will offer a discount of £50 per tour. So, if you book all 3 tours you make a saving of £150.

May

The dry gravel garden at the Beth Chatto Gardens.

Wyken Hall



Feeringbury Manor

GARDENS OF EAST ANGLIA

Hosted by Dr Noël Kingsbury

17-19 May 2013

£895 per person

(with a single supplement of £75)

Our first Ring o' Roses is timed to run prior to Chelsea Flower Show. It includes visits to beautiful private gardens in a typically 'English' region of rural Britain. The gardens live up to their evocative names: Columbine Hall, Parsonage Farm, Wyken Hall, Feeringbury Manor and Saling Hall. At all you will be met for special guided tours to learn the essentials of creating wonderful gardens in this quiet corner of old England. You will stay at The Angel Hotel in Bury St Edmunds where traditional Georgian elegance meets contemporary design with an award-winning restaurant. No visit to the region would be complete without a trip to the Beth Chatto Gardens, where you'll also benefit from a 10 per cent discount on plant sales at the gardens' excellent nursery.

TOUR LEADER **Dr Noël Kingsbury**
Noël is a lecturer and planting designer, and is known internationally as a writer on plants and gardens. His work appears regularly in .

EXCLUSIVE WEEKEND GARDEN BREAKS

June

The gardens at Bourton House include herbaceous borders and fine topiary.

Upton Wold

Kiftsgate

GARDENS OF THE UPPER COTSWOLDS

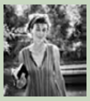
Hosted by Helena Attlee

14-16 June 2013

£969 per person

(with a single supplement of £100)

The northern Cotswolds is a beautiful region of rolling hills and far-reaching views interspersed with ochre-coloured manor houses and cottages surrounded by a wealth of wonderful, high-calibre gardens, long traditions of craftsmanship evident in the architecture, interiors and landscapes. We have selected private gardens including Stone House, Bourton House, Upton Wold and a special opening at the outstanding Kiftsgate, plus we've arranged a container planting demonstration at Whichford Pottery, renowned for its stylish terracotta pots. You stay at the award-winning Manor House Hotel in the Cotswold market town of Moreton-in-Marsh, renowned for warm hospitality and good food.

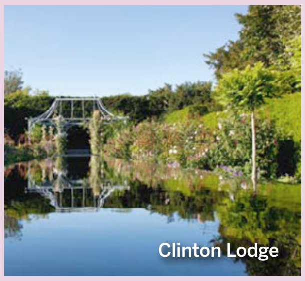


TOUR LEADER **Helena Attlee**
An acclaimed author on the culture and history of gardens both in this country and abroad, Helena has led numerous trips, lectured widely and contributes regularly to magazines.

July

Gravetye Manor, former home of naturalist gardener William Robinson.

Glyndebourne


Clinton Lodge

GARDENS OF THE HEART OF SUSSEX

Hosted by David Wheeler

12-14 July 2013

£998 per person

(with a single supplement of £100)

This is indeed a star-studded garden visiting experience, including guided tours to the gardens of Gravetye Manor, Glyndebourne and Great Dixter, as well as the delectable Clinton Lodge and dreamy Sussex Prairies, ending up with a chance to purchase wonderful plants at Marchants Hardy Plants. For this tour we are focusing on the heart of Sussex, including the wooded Weald and rolling Downlands but on one afternoon venture eastwards to Great Dixter for a special opening to include a meeting with head gardener Fergus Garrett. We have chosen Ockenden Manor Hotel a charming and tranquil Elizabethan Manor House, which offers the very best of hospitality and cuisine recognised by AA and Michelin awards.

TOUR LEADER **David Wheeler**
David has a lifelong interest in plants, gardens and garden-making. He is editor of *Hortus* and *The Penguin Book of Garden Writing*. He gardens eight acres on the Welsh borders.

Booking details for Ring O' Roses garden breaks

For further information about these trips, day-to-day activities, hotel accommodation and details of how to book, please contact Boxwood Tours, Rhiw, Llanbedr, Gwynedd LL45 2NT, UK

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NEWS COMPILED BY SORREL EVERTON

COMPETITION

Garden photography

The deadline for entries to this year's International Garden Photographer of the Year is 30 November. The competition is open to both amateurs and professionals with eight categories relating to gardens, plants or the natural world around us, plus a category for Young Garden Photographer of the Year. Winners will be announced next spring. Full details on www.igpoty.com

Summer in Rain **by Magdalena Wasiczek, winner of the 'Beauty of Plants' category, 2011.**

EVENT

Armscote lecture series

Plantswoman Christine Marchant (see Nurseryman's Favourites , page 20) is one of the speakers at this year's Lecture Series at Armscote Manor, Warwickshire. Other speakers include photographer James Kerr (running a workshop), Susie Pasley-Tyler of Coton Manor, garden writer Val Bourne, Richard Broad of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust, designer Dan Pearson, and artist Melanie Wright (hosting a drawing workshop in the garden), author Jessica Douglas Home, and Armscote head gardener Gwyn Perry. 8-12 October. Proceeds go to Shipston Home Nursing. Full details on 01608 682375, www.armscotemanor.co.uk

New plants

Vernon Geranium Nursery has a selection of new pelargoniums for 2013, including Geranium *'Angels Perfume'. This is an unusual cultivar combining the aroma of a scented-leaf variety with magenta pansy-like flowers typical of an angel type. £4.99 per plug plant. Available to order now with plants despatched in spring next year.*

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WILDLIFE GARDENING

Save our grasslands

Guide to grassland plants 1

The meadow-style plantings at the Olympic Park have sparked further interest in more sustainable and naturalistic planting schemes. The Grasslands Trust is already working to both save our ancient meadows and the native wildlife they support, and encourage a greater appreciation of these threatened landscapes – areas such as the Sussex Weald, Durham's Magnesian Limestone grasslands and species rich meadows at Carmel Nature Reserve in Carmarthenshire. Membership to the Trust is £36 a year with benefits including a guide to grassland plants, a packet of native wildflower seeds, access to an advisory service giving help on planting a meadow and the chance to join in the Trust's preservation work. Their informative website is at www.grasslands-trust.org

EVENT

Garden careers

The Women Returners to Amenity Gardening Scheme (WRAGS) offer support and training to women interested in working in horticulture. On 27 October they are running a seminar in London to discuss options such as garden design, running a nursery, landscape architecture and self-employment as a gardener. £50 (£40 for WRAGS members). Full details on 01285 658339, www.wfga.org.uk

GARDEN CAREERS IMAGE BY SHARON PEARSON

The Inchbald School of Garden Design

> *“I didn’t even have time for a holiday after the course. I had commissions lined up.”*

Stephane Lustig www.lustigoutdoordesign.co.uk
Recently qualified garden design graduate

The Inchbald School of Garden Design enabled me to turn my life around. I was cabin crew for 13 years before I finally took a leap of faith and signed up for the diploma. Now I’m a busy garden designer. I couldn’t have even imagined a better outcome than this.

Graduate Courses

The Diploma in Garden Design course provides a thorough training in garden design, enabling students to enter garden design at a professional level. It is an intensive year-long course, requiring commitment from you, but as such enables you achieve high standards in a relatively short time.

You will be introduced to the design method through mainly residential garden projects that increase in complexity as the course progresses. You will receive tutoring by professional designers in studio, and this is supported by lectures covering aesthetic and practical issues by renowned garden design professionals.

The Inchbald School of Design gives careers advice, and students in the garden design school have been developing successful garden design careers for over 30 years.

Short Courses

A two day a week vocational diploma course offers students simple paving to advanced step design, they will study the various skills needed to confidently design walls, fences, structures and water features together with lighting and irrigation. Students will also acquire the knowledge necessary to produce construction drawings.

Students are taken through the principles and practices of good business and also have the opportunity to set up as Sole Traders, with guidance, whilst on the course.

Online Courses

Dynamic and inspirational, these three-month part-time courses will guide you through the design process so that you can create your own garden or living space. With ongoing support and advice from a practising professional and backed by the expertly produced course materials, you will develop your design ideas to produce a scheme that meets your needs on a functional and aesthetic level.

Each course is made up of an online induction and 12 sessions. You study just one session a week. The course takes about four hours a week, but don’t be surprised if you become so engrossed in design that you end up spending more time than this.

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in the world of gardens

Roger Parsons

Owner of Roger Parsons Sweet Peas. Awarded the Henry Eckford Medal this year from the National Sweet Pea Society for his book *Sweet Peas: an Essential Guide.*

What is your earliest gardening memory? Saving my own seeds, aged about 10, and growing them the next year. There were marigolds, pansies, stocks and, of course, sweet peas.

How did you become involved with gardening as a profession? My parents were not gardeners so I had the care of the garden. I left school at 16 and worked in an office for a year which made me realise that gardening is far more enjoyable.

Why sweet peas? They are addictive! Once you have enjoyed the scent, the colours and the delicacy of the blooms, you crave more. Eventually, all other plants fail to satisfy compared with the 'high' that sweet peas give you.

What is your top gardening tip when it comes to growing sweet peas? Don't support them with a wigwam – the plants get too crowded when they reach the top. Use a ring of vertical canes instead. Old-fashioned pea sticks are the most decorative support.

Do you have a favourite sweet pea? 'Albutt Blue', introduced in 1999. It is intermediate between the modern Spencer type and the Old-fashioned type, with the best qualities of both. The petals are white, with blue picotee edge, and it has exceptionally good scent.

Which is your favourite garden to visit? **Anne Hathaway's garden** at Stratford-on-Avon includes wonderful displays of sweet peas.

If you weren't a plantsman what would you be? I was very active in politics as a teenager but I soon realised that gardeners are much nicer people than politicians.

Who would you most like to have dinner with (past or present)? **Aung San Suu Kyi**, the Burmese democracy leader. I admire her formidable courage, dignity, humility, willpower and intellect.

Not a lot of people know this about me. I keep miniature horses. My 34-inch-high stallion was champion at the Royal International Horse Show at Hickstead in July 2012, our best result to date.

The latest Roger Parsons Sweet Peas seed catalogue is now available, listing a selection of over 1,200 sweet peas to choose from and including six new AGM-winning, semi-dwarf varieties. For a copy of the catalogue send address details and a 50p stamp to Roger Parsons Sweet Peas, Primrose Cottage, Clayton Lane, Bracklesham Bay, Chichester, West Sussex PO20 8JQ. Alternatively you can view online at www.rpsweetpeas.co.uk

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EXHIBITION EVENT

Plant hunting today

The current Plant Seekers exhibition at London's Garden Museum gathers together archive material from the Royal Horticultural Society's Lindley Library to relate the history of plant hunting and its importance to our lives today. To complement the exhibition, the museum is hosting a day of discussion on 'Plant Hunting in the 21st Century' on 1 October with speakers including renowned plantsmen Roy Lancaster, Bleddyn Wynn-Jones of Crûg Farm Plants and Michael Wickenden of Cally Gardens discussing current issues of legitimacy, conservation and relevance. Tickets cost £70. A second symposium takes place on 15 October looking at 'Natives and Aliens: Ethnicity in the Garden' and considers how open the British garden culture is to foreign influences. Tickets £50. Both events need to be booked in advance. Tel 020 7401 8865, www.gardenmuseum.org.uk

Diary

- **Apple Weekend** Waterperry Gardens celebrates the harvest with free apple and juice tastings, displays, information, advice and tours of the orchards and fruit sheds. 5-7 October, 10.30am-4pm. Waterperry Gardens, Nr Wheatley, Oxfordshire OX33 1JZ. Tel 01844 339254, www.waterperrygardens.co.uk

- **Growing Soft Fruit** Barnsdale gardener Nick Hamilton gives tips on growing a wide range of soft fruit, looking at soil requirements, aspects, growing conditions, training and pruning. 11 October, 10.30am-12.30pm. £18. Booking essential. Barnsdale Gardens, The Avenue, Exton, Oakham, Rutland LE15 8AH. Tel 01572 813200, www.barnsdalegardens.co.uk

- **Autumn Plant Sale** Selection of herbaceous perennials and shrubs at reduced prices at RHS Rosemoor's Plant Centre. Also worth noting that the café has won the best garden centre restaurant award for the Wales and West Area. 13-28 October, 10am-5.30pm. Rosemoor, Torrington, Devon EX38 8PH. Tel 01805 624067, www.rhs.org.uk

- **Wakehurst Place Great Seed Swap** Community seed swap – exchange your home-grown seeds and find other unusual or heritage seeds to try, plus demonstrations and tours. Held in partnership with Garden Organic. 20 October, 11am-5pm. Wakehurst Place, Ardingly, West Sussex RH17 6TN. Tel 01444 894066, www.kew.org/visit-wakehurst

AUTUMN PLANT SALE IMAGE BY RGB KEW, COTTAGE: EYE35, AUNG SAN SUU KYI: ALEXANDER WIDDING, BOTH ALAMY

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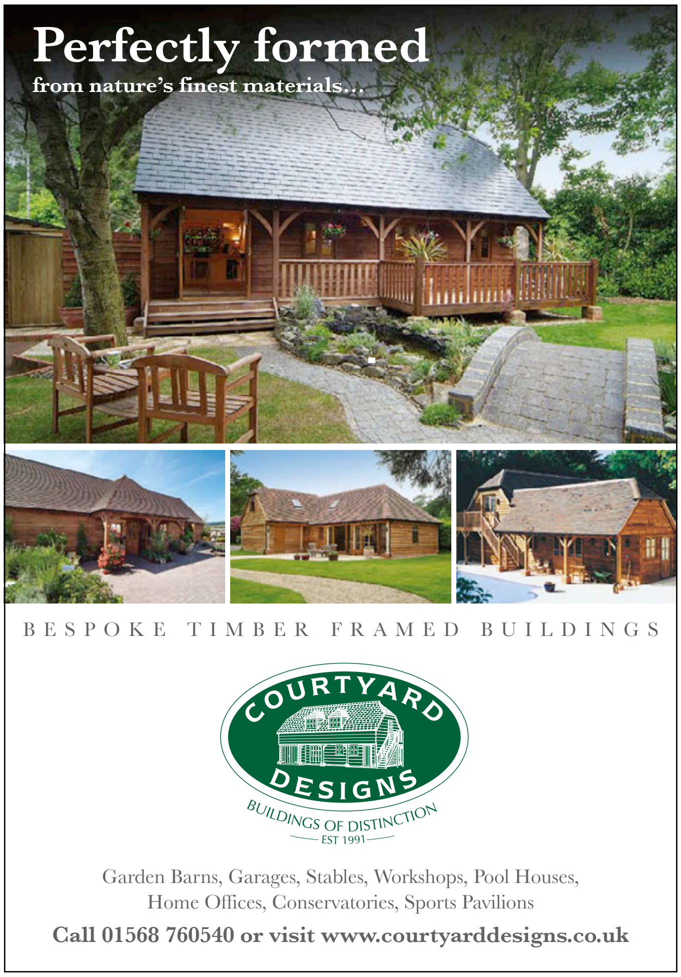

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END HUNGER >>> GROW FARMING

FARM AFRICA

THE MOST VALUABLE SEEDS YOU'LL EVER BUY

Elizabeth worries constantly about how she will feed her children

It's early on a blisteringly hot morning. As your hoe hits the red-hot earth, it clangs back, hard. Season after season, you've watched your crops wither and die as the ground in your small plot of land is baked solid by the sun. But still, you persist – because if your crops fail again, your children could starve.

Priceless seeds... for just £30

Elizabeth is just one of many Kenyan farmers trapped in the heartbreaking situation above. She's relying on food aid to feed her family. But what she really needs is farm aid – an acre's worth of Farm Africa's drought-tolerant seeds.

The crops these seeds grow into aren't your average veg patch staples – they're hardy crops like cowpeas and sorghum, which grow even in the toughest, driest ground. That's what makes them priceless to Elizabeth. And for just £30, you can buy enough seeds to sow an acre, so that at long last, she can turn her land into food.

"We don't know what we will eat tonight"

Right now, feeding her three children is a constant worry; there's only enough for one small meal a day and Elizabeth's youngest son, Stephen, has never known what it's like to have a full tummy.

Act now, before the short November rains

In Kenya, the best time of year for planting is just before the rains which are due in November. So the farmers there need seeds, now. Please reach out – one grower to another – and give £30 today, so that families like Elizabeth's can grow an acre and end their hunger. Thank you.

Registered charity no. 326901. Food and Agricultural Research Management Ltd is a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales no. 01926828

YES, I'LL HELP A FAMILY FEED THEMSELVES, BY PLANTING AN ACRE OF LAND WITH DROUGHT-TOLERANT SEEDS

Please fill in your details: Title ____________

Name ____________ Surname ____________

Address ____________

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____________ Postcode ____________

Tel ____________

Email ____________

If you are happy to hear from Farm Africa by email please fill in your email address above

HERE IS MY GIFT OF ☐ **£30** ☐ **OTHER £** ____________

☐ I enclose my cheque/PO/CAF voucher made payable to Farm Africa or

☐ Please debit my MasterCard/Visa/CAF Charity Card/Maestro (Please delete as necessary)

Card no. ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐ (Maestro only)

Start date ☐☐/☐☐ Expiry date ☐☐/☐☐ Issue number ☐☐ (Maestro only)

Signature ____________ Date ____________

Please return form to: Freepost RSZZ-BRTX-YYTR, Farm Africa, Windrush Park Road, WITNEY OX29 7EW

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FundRaising Standards Board

DONATE ONLINE AT FARMAFRICA.ORG.UK/GROW OR CALL 020 7430 0440

Occasionally we agree with carefully selected charities to contact each other's supporters for our mutual benefit. If you do not want Farm Africa to use your details in this way, please tick the box. ☐ Registered charity no. 326901

END HUNGER >>> GROW FARMING
FARM AFRICA

READER EVENT
6-7 October 2012

Browse the selection of interesting and unusual plants on offer at stands from some of Europe's top plantsmen.

Great Dixter Plant Fair

DATE
Sat 6 & Sun 7 October

TIME
11am-4pm

COST
£7.50 includes entry to the Garden at Great Dixter

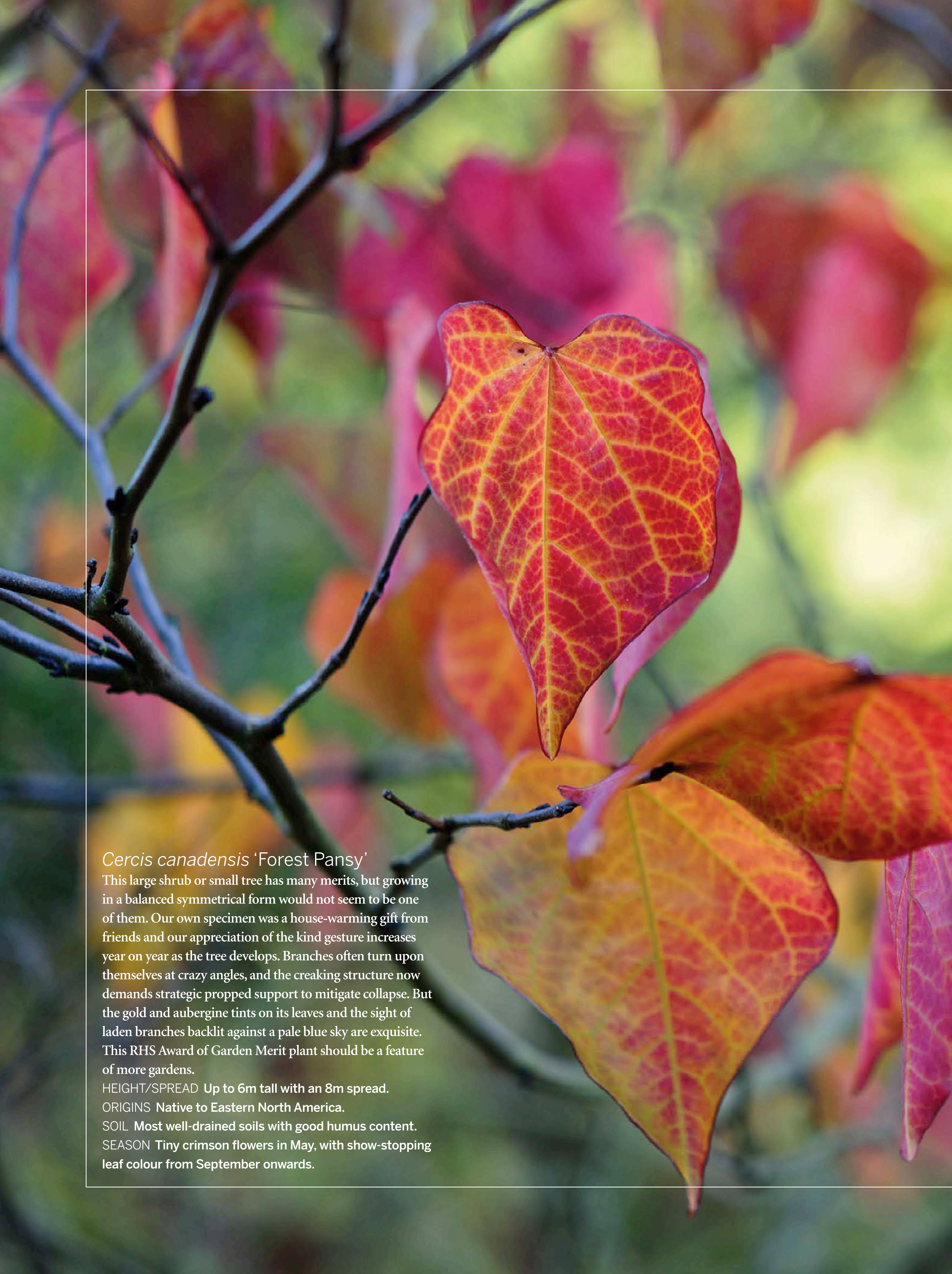
CONTACT
Tel 01797 252878
www.greatdixter.co.uk

Ten per cent of all proceeds go towards the Christopher Lloyd Travel Bursary. The bursary is open to applicants between 18-35 years of age, or are in their first five years of a career in horticulture. It gives candidates the opportunity to travel, see plants and places and gain work experience within the world of horticulture.

Visit the iconic gardens at Great Dixter and enjoy a unique opportunity to buy plants from a select group of top nurseries from the UK and overseas

Now in its third year, the Great Dixter Plant Fair gives you the opportunity to buy new and exciting plants from a carefully selected group of growers and plantsmen brought together for just two days. It's also a great chance to see the gardens in their late season glory and visit Great Dixter's own nursery. Growers and plantsmen attending the Fair include:

- Nurseryman **Hans Kramer from De Hessenhof** in the Netherlands with his special selection of herbaceous plants (see our feature on the nursery in the September issue 189).
- **Bob Brown from Cotswold Garden Flowers**, known for his tried and tested plant choice.
- **Judy Barker from Hertfordshire** with samples of her historic collection of hardy chrysanthemums.
- **Award-winning nursery Daisy Roots** from Hertfordshire specialising in choice and unusual perennials and grasses.
- **Mathieu Vermes of Domaine de la Source in Picardie** makes his first visit with a large collection of asters.
- **Howard and Sally Wills from Fernwood Nursery** in Devon will be bringing their national collection of *Sempervivum*.
- **PLUS** many other exciting nurseries and garden sundries.



Cercis canadensis 'Forest Pansy'

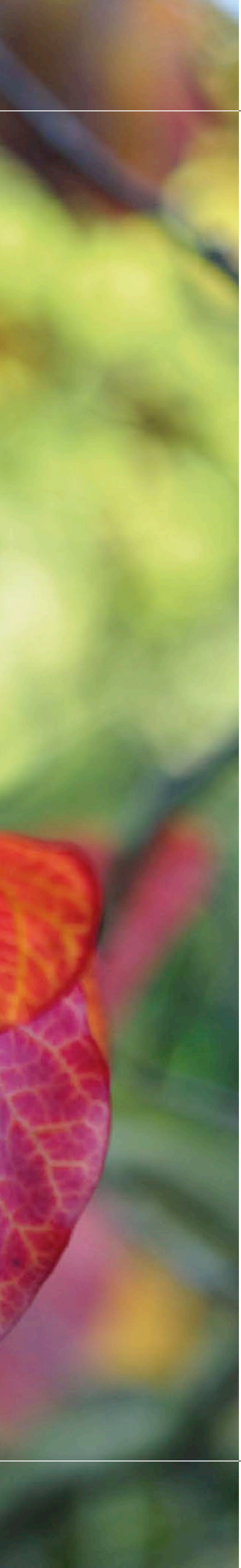
This large shrub or small tree has many merits, but growing in a balanced symmetrical form would not seem to be one of them. Our own specimen was a house-warming gift from friends and our appreciation of the kind gesture increases year on year as the tree develops. Branches often turn upon themselves at crazy angles, and the creaking structure now demands strategic propped support to mitigate collapse. But the gold and aubergine tints on its leaves and the sight of laden branches backlit against a pale blue sky are exquisite. This RHS Award of Garden Merit plant should be a feature of more gardens.

HEIGHT/SPREAD **Up to 6m tall with an 8m spread.**

ORIGINS **Native to Eastern North America.**

SOIL **Most well-drained soils with good humus content.**

SEASON **Tiny crimson flowers in May, with show-stopping leaf colour from September onwards.**



October plants

Nine favourites offering autumn interest, whether from flame-coloured leaves, shapely fruits, berries and seedheads, or long-lasting flowers

WORDS **CHRIS MARCHANT** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**

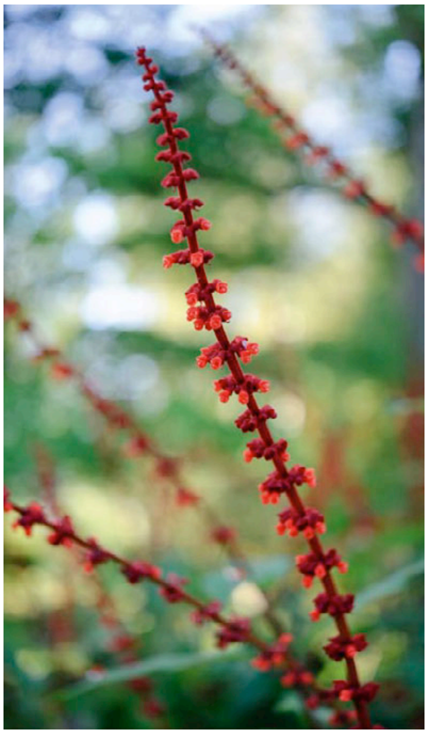
CHARLIE HOPKINSON

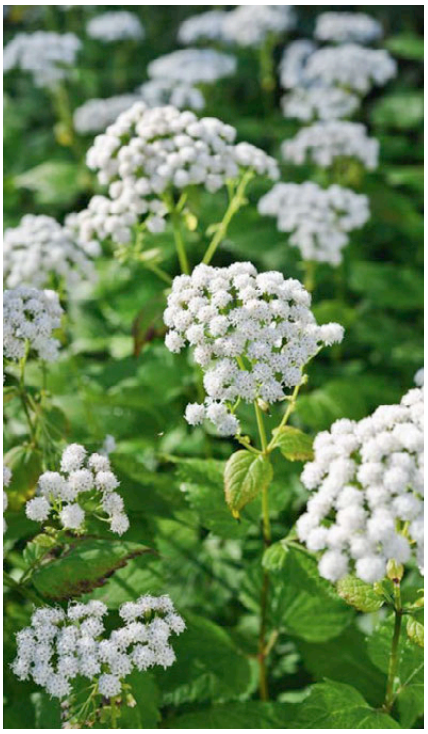
Chris Marchant is co-owner of Orchard Dene Nurseries in Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, a wholesale grower specialising in hardy herbaceous plants

Salvia confertiflora

Giant pots of this are wheeled on to the terrace at home each summer, threaded informally between specimen *Agapanthus praecox* to give an exuberant floral display which lasts into October. It may not be winter hardy, but the rate and quality of growth in a single season merits better recognition for summer display. Stems are covered in a rash of scarlet hairs that define the elegant profile, and each carry a succession of coral-red flowers in ascending whorls. Even when flower petals drop, the dark red calyces will command admiring glances. Cuttings taken at the end of summer can be over-wintered for next year.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 150cm x 50cm.
ORIGINS Native to South America/Brazil.
SOIL Free-draining loam, or perfect for pots.
SEASON July to September.

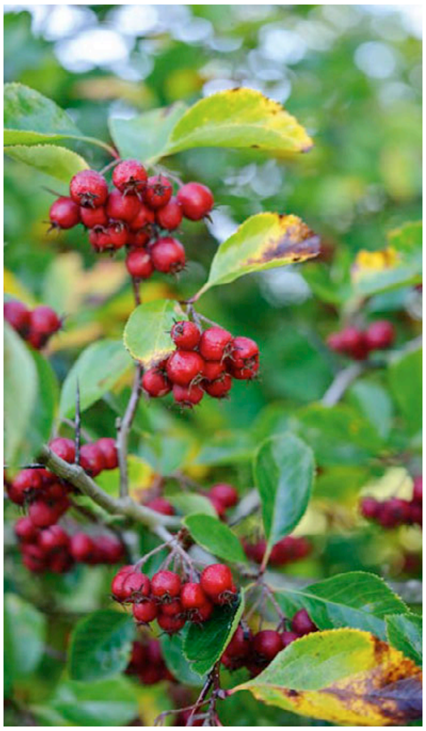




Ageratina altissima 'Braunlaub'

Striking, high-colour plants sometimes need a foil and I love the way this plant can be offered up to such a wide range of classics to achieve the necessary bridge between strong or strident colours. Helenium, rudbeckia, aster and crocosmia are eased into a harmonious group when partnered with *Ageratina*. Groups of this plant growing on the nursery will regularly attract clouds of butterflies – a good reason to include them in any garden. *Ageratina* was previously grouped with *Eupatorium* in its classification, and the characteristics are very similar.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 100cm x 60cm.
ORIGINS North America.
SOIL Free-draining garden loam.
SEASON Late August to October.



Crataegus persimilis 'Prunifolia'

I sense a whiff of eastern exoticism about this small tree, spectacular in its autumn foliage, which turns gradually to orange, presenting bright crimson before falling. At once, the tree is left naked, but for the brilliant red fruits which adorn the boughs, like a blushing Salome resplendent in nought but jewels. Earliest cultivation can be traced back to the 18th century when it occurred as a hybrid of two North American species. A beautiful small tree, but with significant thorns, so position it with care. This is an RHS Award of Garden Merit plant.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 6m x 4-5m.
ORIGINS North American parentage.
SOIL Most fertile garden loam.
SEASON Flowers from May to June, with fruits from September to November.

Cladrastis kentukea

Cladrastis comes from the Greek, translating as 'brittle shoot'. One of the *Leguminosae* family, its fragrant flowers appear in late spring in extravagant pendulous clusters, followed by slim, elongated pods. Sadly, the flowers are rare in Britain, requiring prolonged early warmth to ripen the buds, but it has other merits, and even our cooler climate will gradually progress the fresh green leaves to golden pinnate foliage in autumn. At this point, the tree shines a warming cast over a chilly autumnal garden. It can be successfully pollarded to keep the profile in check if required.

HEIGHT/SPREAD Up to 20m x 7m.
ORIGINS Eastern USA.
SOIL Prefers a moisture-retentive soil.
SEASON Flowers May to June with attractive foliage September to October.

Miscanthus sinensis 'Krater'

This shorter *Miscanthus* is particularly useful in the front or middle rank of a deep border, where I find it provides a strong visual anchor during the colder months without obscuring other shapely forms. The narrow green blades have a pronounced white mid-rib; gently arching flower stems rise taller to support a host of chestnut-brown flower panicles during September and October. By November the foliage has mellowed to a warm biscuit brown, and plumes have attained a silvery sheen. This scene is set until you choose to cut back, which we do in February, to await the new season's growth.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 150cm x 60cm.
ORIGINS Species originates in Eastern Asia.
SOIL Most fertile garden loams.
SEASON September to November.

Places to visit

Chris Marchant shares some of her favourite places to see plants at their best.

Great Fosters in Surrey began life as a royal hunting lodge in 1550. Now it is a luxury hotel set in 50 acres of gardens and parkland forming a glorious marriage of ancient and modern. Over the past century, the gardens have been restored, extended and enhanced by various skilled practitioners. A recent and exciting addition is the sensuously curved grass amphitheatre, designed by the landscape architect Kim Wilkie. Set as the focal point at the end of a Lime Avenue, its simplicity of form and balance of scale are brilliant. Non-resident guests are able to book afternoon tea at the hotel. Great Fosters, Stroude Road, Egham, Surrey TW20 9UR. Tel 01784 433822, www.greatfosters.co.uk

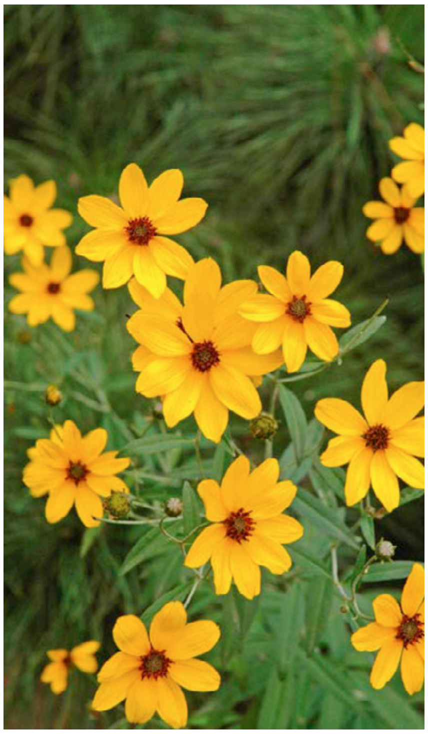
Curved grass amphitheatre, designed by the landscape architect Kim Wilkie.

CHARLES HAWES / GAP PHOTOS

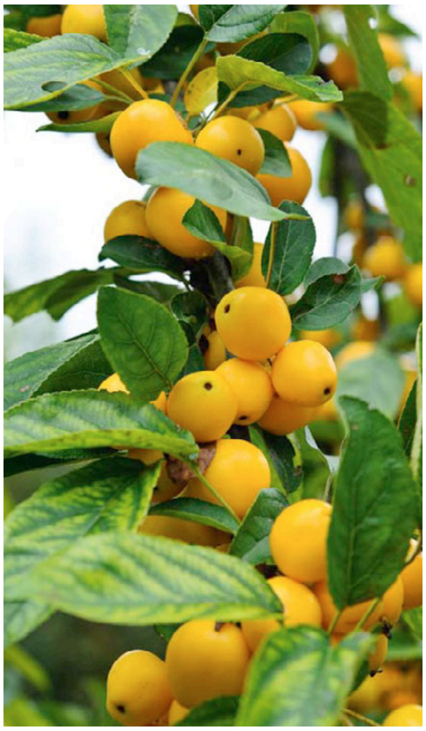
Coreopsis tripteris

A wiry, unassuming plant that scarcely warrants attention for eight months of the year. All that changes in September and October when the ever-extending stems finally yield up a vivid yellow bloom and the shortening days coax the foliage into flamboyant autumn attire of gold and burgundy. Each flower is relatively small, so the intensity of colour is perfectly balanced by generous proportions of foliage. Its slender upright form is ideal for threading among *Miscanthus* grasses which offer the token support needed to prevent collapse.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 200cm x 50cm.
ORIGINS From eastern USA.
SOIL Free-draining garden loam, best protected from full sun in woodland edge conditions.
SEASON Late August to October.



KPZ FOTO / ALAMY



Malus x zumi 'Golden Hornet'

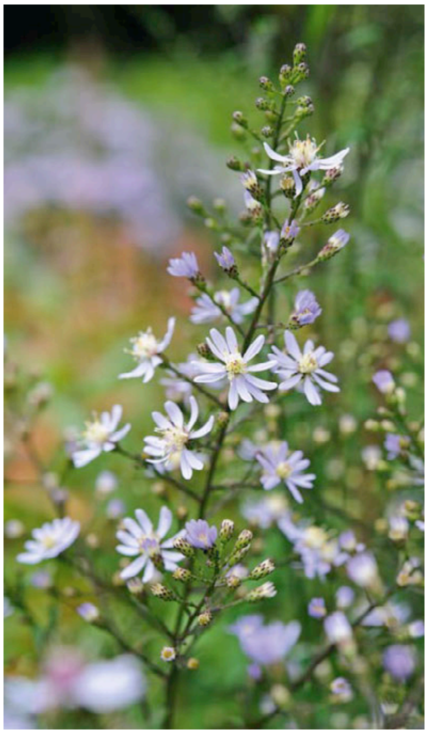
A neat pyramidal habit, and tolerance of light pollution, makes this tree ideal for smaller urban gardens where it serves well as a pollinator for other *Malus* cultivars. Flowers are pink in bud, opening to fragrant white blossom. Small groups of the trees, arranged in groves, make an enchanting sight, both in spring and autumn. Long, slender branches are tested by the abundance of their golden harvest, when amber fruits the size of marbles are an invitation to fieldfares. Awarded an RHS Award of Garden Merit.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 10m x 8m.
ORIGINS A hybrid between *M. baccata* and *M. sieboldii.*
SOIL Well-drained neutral to alkaline loam.
SEASON Flowers in May, with fruits from August to November.

Aster cordifolius 'Elegans'

We first came upon *A.* 'Elegans' in the nursery gardens of Paul Picton in Malvern. In its early stages, the slender stems and fine branching structure suggest fragility. But this idea is soon confounded as buds begin to open and the full extent of voluminous display is revealed. A myriad of tiny powder blue daisies are studded along each branch; the result is a light, airy feature for the autumn border. Disease resistant and requiring no special attention, this offers a potential flower arrangement in each stem. Set among the darker burgundy foliage of sedums and eupatorium, the effect is simple and long lasting.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 150cm x 60cm.
ORIGINS Species originates in North America.
SOIL Free-draining loam, neutral to alkaline.
SEASON September to early November.



The magnificent walled estate at **Buscot Park** (20 miles southwest of Oxford) incorporates a Grade II-listed historic park and garden with a beautiful water garden by Harold Peto, set within a wooded glade. More recently, the walled kitchen garden was given a contemporary twist by garden designer Tim Rees including a new pleached avenue of *Ostrya carpinifolia* (hop hornbeam) and a tunnel of *Cercis siliquastrum* (Judas tree). It is a fine example of a gracious family garden, lived in and currently administered by Lord Faringdon on behalf of the National Trust. See website for opening times. Buscot Park, Faringdon, SN7 8BU. Tel 01367 240786, www.buscot-park.com

On a more intimate scale, I never tire of visiting local woodland for an autumn walk. Planning a visit has become easier with the new website **www.visitwoods.org.uk**, which tailors suggested places to your specified postcode, access requirements and particular likes. The website features woods owned by a range of trusts and charities and aims to ensure that families spend more time enjoying them.

A tall group of *Echinops* in the border at Buscot Park.

DAVID NIXON / GAP PHOTOS

The best trees for **autumn colour**

Depending on the season, Autumn colour seems to be either sustained and dramatic or all over and done with, far too quickly. Strong October winds are generally to blame for taking the glorious foliage displays away from us in the Autumn but here are a couple of top tips from **Mike Glover**, Managing Director of Europe's largest containerised tree nursery, **Barcham Trees**.

Mike says, "There are two dependable ways you can bend nature to your favour and one genus that is fantastic for producing long range Autumn colour, is **Liquidambar** (top right). The variety 'Worplesdon' is a particularly great clone as it starts to colour in September but can hold onto a fair proportion of its pretty Maple-like leaves as late as December. Its leaves lower down the branches that were the first to be produced in Spring turn a lovely buttercup yellow and fall quickly in October but the outermost leaves graduate from yellow to orange/red before maturing to deep claret for November."

"Another tree, **Pyrus Chanticleer** (Above left), retains its greens and glossy leaves all the way through to mid November before turning yellow and red in December. They have been known to still have a smattering of colouring left at Christmas. Most trees are six months in leaf and six months dormant but this clone prolongs this to 9 months activity and just 3 months dormancy as it flushes up with a great display of white flowers in March."

For more suggestions and guidance on trees suitable for your garden, log onto **www.buythetreeyousee.com**. This brand new website is unique in that you see a short video of the actual tree that you choose and **Barcham Trees** then deliver to your door. **Rest assured that what you order is what you receive**.

Cooler heads

As the temperature begins to drop, some forward planning is required to prepare for the approaching winter months. Now is the time to ponder fruit and veg seed buying so that next year's harvests can reward your diligence

WORDS **LIA LEENDERTZ** ILLUSTRATION **GEORGINA LUCK**

PRACTICAL

Cure pumpkins and squashes in the sun

To store well, pumpkins and squashes need a tough skin, and the best way to develop that is a spell lying in the sun, post-harvest. If good weather is predicted they can be left on a hard surface (not the soil) out of doors, but otherwise this 'curing' process will need to take place in a greenhouse, cold frame or even on a sunny windowsill. Don't dice with frost during this period: if there is any chance, then bring squash indoors or they will turn to mush, or at the very least become useless for storing.

THINGS TO DO

If you haven't got much time, just do these essential tasks…

Cook any still-green tomatoes southern US-style: coat in fine polenta and fry until golden.

Earth up the stems of Brussels sprouts to prevent them rocking in winter winds.

Cover the crowns of slightly tender perennials such as globe artichokes with a mound of soil to keep the frost out.

Check over harvested apples for any blemishes. Store the perfect ones and eat the imperfect.

THREE OF THE BEST

Garlics

Plant garlic now and into November for the biggest bulbs ready to harvest next summer. On heavy ground ridge up soil and plant your cloves along the top.

Bianco Veneto
A white, softneck garlic that stores well. From www.seedsofitaly.com

Rocambole
(*Allium sativum* var. *ophioscorodon*) With delicate purple cloves, this is one of the finest tasting garlics. A 'gourmet' hardnecked type, from the La Mancha region of central Spain. www.thegarlicfarm.co.uk

Elephant garlic
(*Allium ampeloprasum* 'Elephant') Not a true garlic (more closely related to the leek) but grown similarly. Huge heads of mild cloves are produced in summer, and are wonderful roasted. www.marshalls-seeds.co.uk

BLOG

Silvertreedaze

silvertreedaze.blogspot.co.uk
Nigel Colborn is perhaps the most opinionated gardener on the internet. There is nothing garden-related he will not have words on, and those words are always heartfelt and often hilarious. See him hold forth on rose breeding: ('Blue Moon' – 'liverish mauve, always diseased', and 'Superstar' – 'Kia-Ora-cum-tomato-juice orange ... as a fishing float the hue would work perfectly'). But the rants are leavened with sensible observations, and are an insider's take – Nigel is chairman of RHS's Tender Ornamental Plants Committee, judges at RHS shows and sits on its Horticultural Board. Never dull, always worth a visit.

SILVERTREEDAZE

Gardenish ramblings with Nigel Colborn.

Thursday, 23 August 2012

A SUPRANORMAL SERVICE WILL BE RESUMED SOON.

HANDY INFORMATION

Photography
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To view or purchase more of our pictures, please visit www.gardenworldimages.com, select 'Advanced Search' and

PRACTICAL

Order bare-rooted plants

This is a serious plant buyer's time of year, a time to forgo such fripperies as flowers – or even leaves – and to turn our thoughts sensibly towards roots. Order soft fruit (raspberries, gooseberries, redcurrants) and top fruit (apples, pears, plums) now and you will receive bare-rooted specimens, cheaper than their pot-grown equivalents and faster to establish. Try Ken Muir (www.kenmuir.co.uk). For just-dug strawberry plants to fruit next year, Deacons (www.deaconsnurseryfruits.co.uk) and Keepers (www.keepers-nursery.co.uk). Winter rains will give those roots plenty of time to burrow down deep into the earth, long before any need to produce leaves.

ONE TO MAKE

Eve's pudding

This is such a simple way to make fruit into a pudding that I use it all summer long, for all my harvests. The sponge bakes on the top of the fruit, and there is a delicious layer in the middle that can't quite decide if it is fruit or sponge. For a plum or apricot version replace 50g of the flour with ground almonds, and scatter sliced almonds on the top.

INGREDIENTS
2 large Bramley apples
zest and juice of 1 lemon
75g caster sugar
2 tbsp water
Sponge:
175g self-raising flour
3 large eggs
175g soft butter
175g caster sugar
½ tsp vanilla extract

- Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F), gas mark 4, and butter a 23cm square pudding dish. Peel and core the apples then slice thinly. Put them into a bowl with the lemon zest, lemon juice, sugar and water and toss together before laying in the base of the dish. Put all of the sponge ingredients into a large mixing bowl and mix with an electric whisk for one minute. Spread it on top of the fruit and bake for 40-45 minutes. Serve with lots of custard.

Moorcroft Art Pottery

Established 1897

Historic Art Pottery launches art collection for enthusiasts worldwide to celebrate 25-years of a global Collectors' Club

Since 1897, each piece of Moorcroft has been made entirely by hand from start to finish using craft techniques that have not changed from when ceramic designer and chemist from the Royal College of Art, William Moorcroft, discovered this unique art form. Moorcroft, is now considered to be the jewel in the crown of English Art Pottery, with a pedigree that commenced with a gold medal across the Atlantic in 1904. These pieces of art pottery pictured on this page, are from the No.19 Collection which includes 19 other designs, created to mark 25-years of Moorcroft's Global Collectors Club.

From time to time Moorcroft release exclusive collections purely for specific countries. Notwithstanding the fact that Moorcroft retailers in and around Christchurch, New Zealand, had their shops severely damaged by the 2011 earthquakes, Moorcroft Designer, Emma Bossons FRSA, toured New Zealand with a collection to awake the soul to the beauty of New Zealand's Natural World. In 2012, as the Olympics Games were in full swing, the Art Gallery toured Australia with another collection, A Tribute to Terra Australis, and caused a media frenzy. Discerning Moorcroft enthusiasts may wish to contact our retailers listed on the Moorcroft website to seek out exclusive pieces of art pottery in the USA, Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

SINGING THE BLUES
Designer: Rachel Bishop
Height: 35cm
Numbered Edition
£695

COLLECTING TIME
Designer: Vicky Lovatt
Height: 21cm
Limited Edition: 75
£495

SWINGTIME BELLE
Designer: Nicola Slaney
Height: 22.5cm
Limited Edition: 75
£430

BALLERINA BLUSH
Designer: Vicky Lovatt
Height: 15cm
Numbered Edition
£325

MOORCROFT

www.moorcroft.com

said to be the finest art pottery in the world

Made entirely by hand in Stoke-on-Trent, England

Contact the Moorcroft Heritage Visitor Centre at enquires@moorcroft.com or one of our global retailers www.moorcroft.com to find out more about what is said to be the finest art pottery in the world today.

Escape and Unwind

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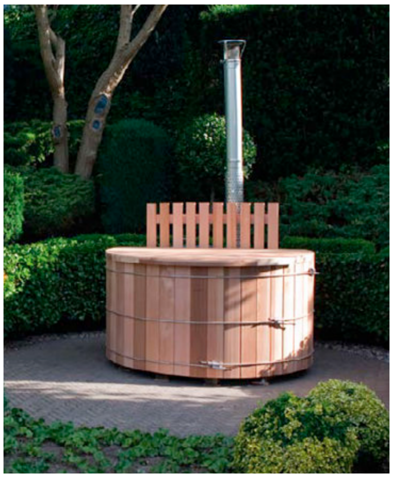

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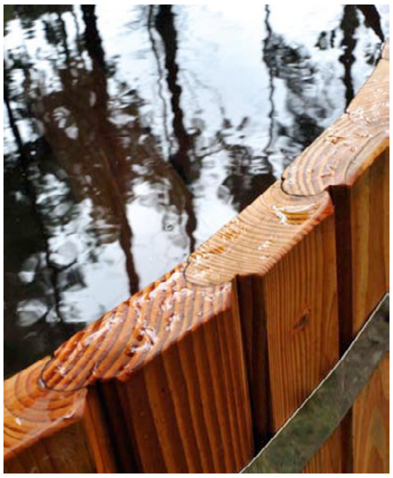

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PHOTOGRAPHS **SEAN MALYON** STYLING **AMY GRENHAM**

1 Autumn is the perfect time to replace the edging in your raised beds. This **oak edging** is available as made-up squares, or as linear runs to your dimensions. Made-up squares with posts ready to install are £595 (£714 incl VAT) for 1.5m x 1.5m, from Arne Maynard Garden Design, 020 7689 8100, www.arnemaynard.com. Gather up your harvest in this handmade, **sweet chestnut and willow trug**, £53, from Hen & Hammock, 01844 217060, www.henandhammock.co.uk. This lightweight **Japanese shrub sickle**, £20 from Manufactum, is handy for a variety of clearing tasks, including slicing through the toughest pumpkin stalk, 0800 096 0938, www.manufactum.co.uk

SHOT ON LOCATION AT ALLTY-BELA, GRADE II LISTED LATE MEDIEVAL FARMHOUSE, HOME OF GARDEN DESIGNER ARNE MAYNARD. FOR INFORMATION AND BOOKING DETAILS FOR B&B PLEASE CONTACT WILLIAM COLLINSON AT 07892 403 103, EMAIL BB@ALLTYBELA.CO.UK OR VISIT WWW.ALLTYBELA.CO.UK

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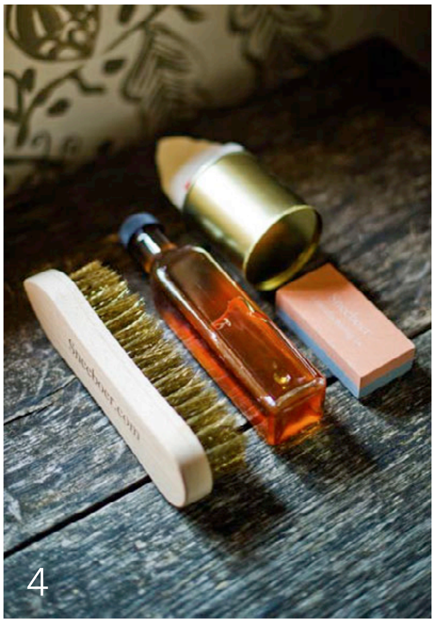
2 This **beechwood seed box** will keep your seeds dark and dry, £28.50, from Manufactum, as before. Keep track of your precious seeds by labelling and storing them in these hand-printed paper **seed packets**, £10 for five, from Hen and Hammock, as before. Haws **copper seedling** and **watering can**, £39.95, Harrod Horticultural, 0845 4025300, www.harrodhorticultural.com

3



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3 The tool you need to sort out the shed will always be to hand with this Sneeboer **hand tool rack**, £10.95. These Sneeboer **hand tools** are available in a set of three, including a 'short fat' trowel, hand fork and weed gouger, £55.85, all from Harrod Horticultural, as before. Let the soil from your carrots drop straight through this **organic string bag**, £4, from Hen & Hammock, as before.

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5 Gather up the autumn leaves with this silver birch and hazel **besom broom**, £23 and store in **biodegradable jute sacks** to compost down to the perfect leaf mould, £1.90 each, all available from Hen & Hammock as before.

6 Shape your shrubs with these **Japanese lightweight carbon steel hedge shears**, £76, from Manufactum, as before.

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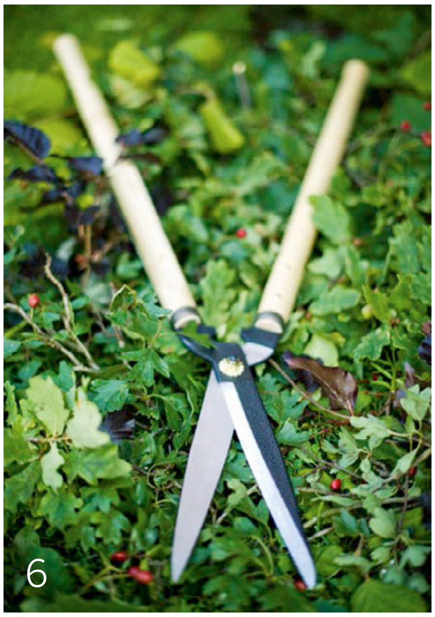

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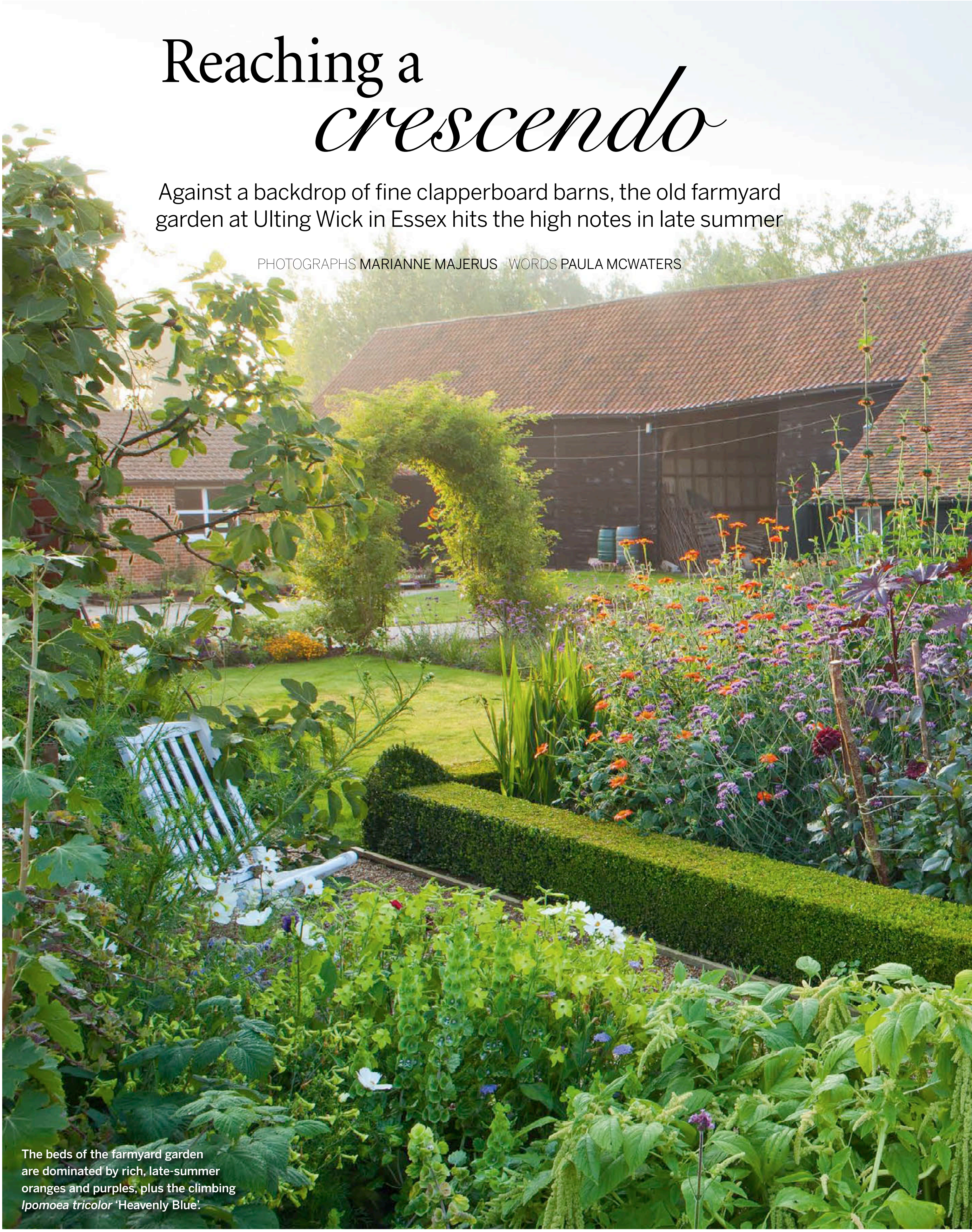
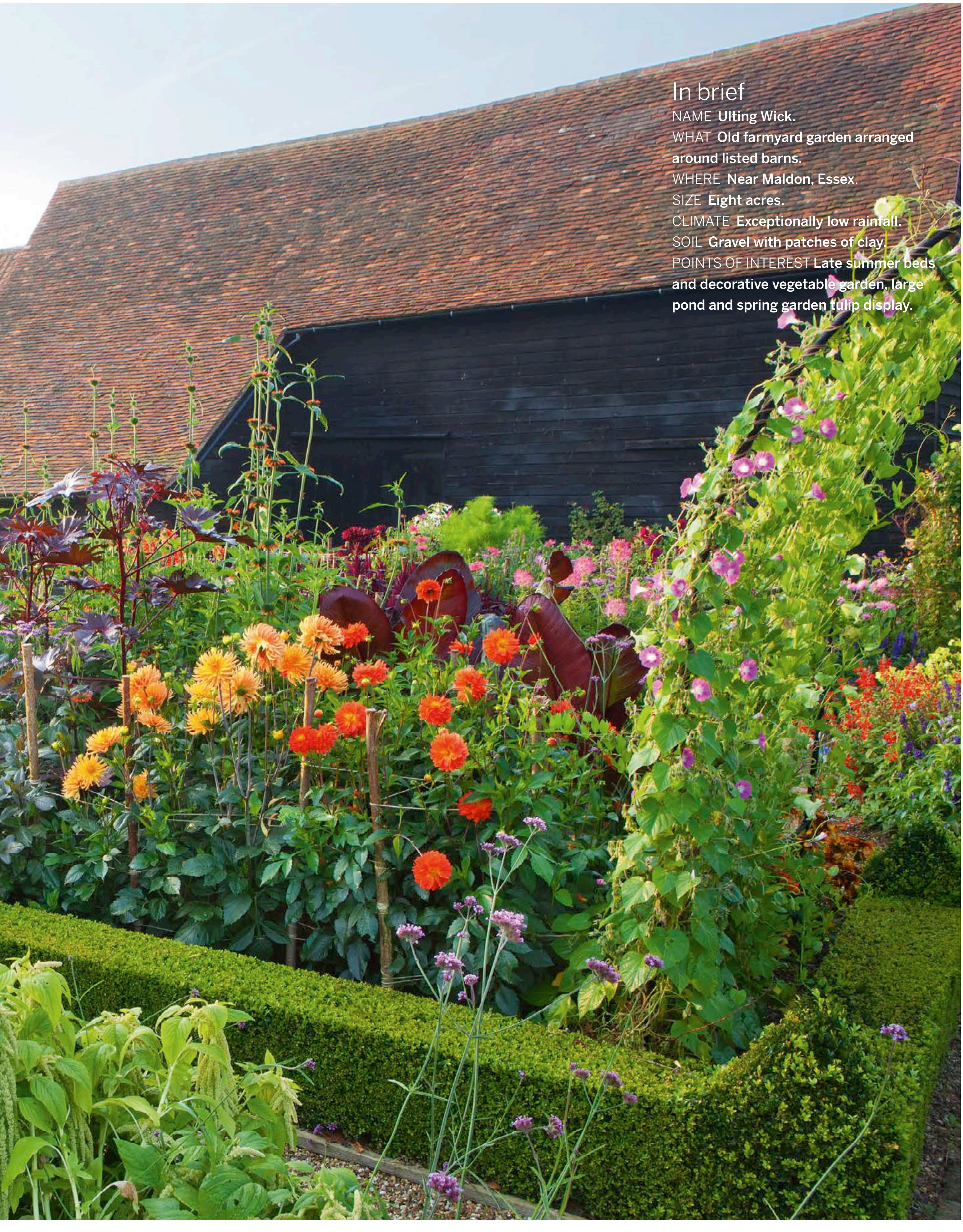
Reaching a *crescendo*

Against a backdrop of fine clapperboard barns, the old farmyard garden at Ulting Wick in Essex hits the high notes in late summer

PHOTOGRAPHS MARIANNE MAJERUS WORDS PAULA MCWATERS

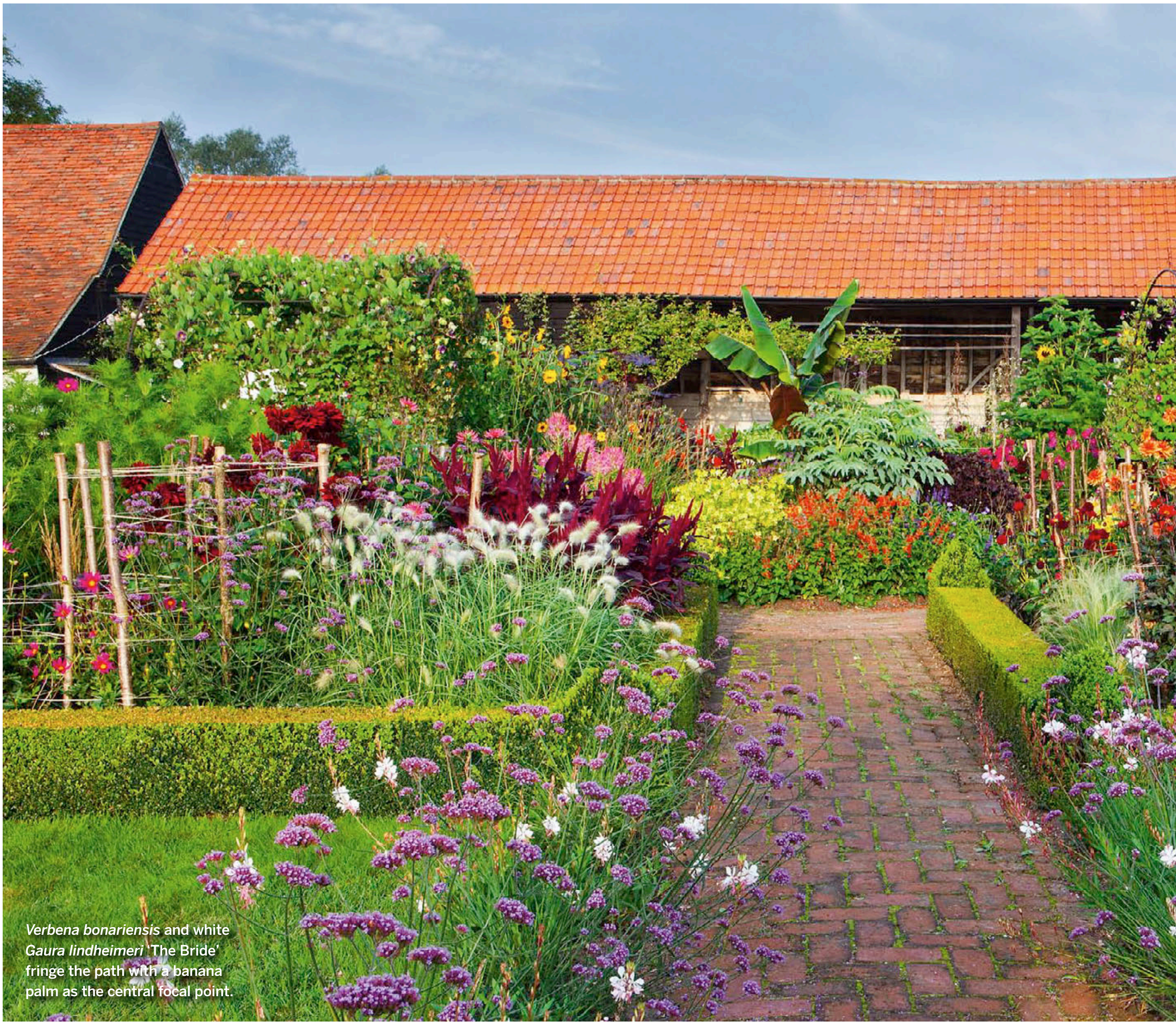


The beds of the farmyard garden are dominated by rich, late-summer oranges and purples, plus the climbing *Ipomoea tricolor* 'Heavenly Blue'.

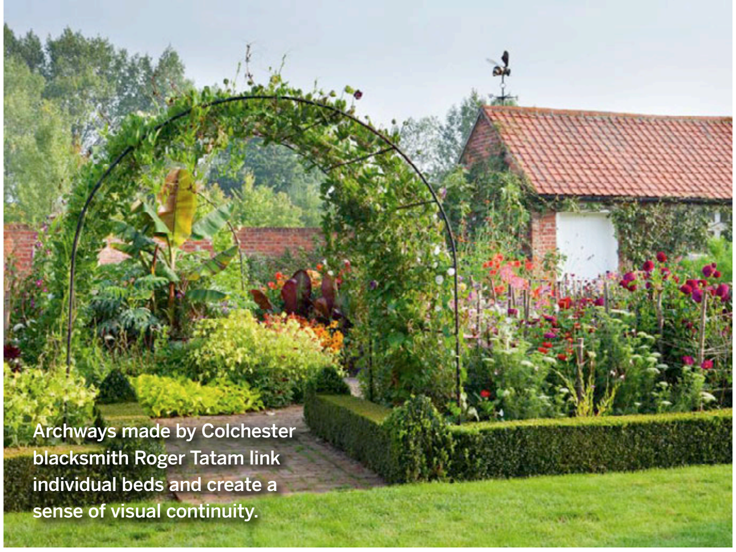


In brief

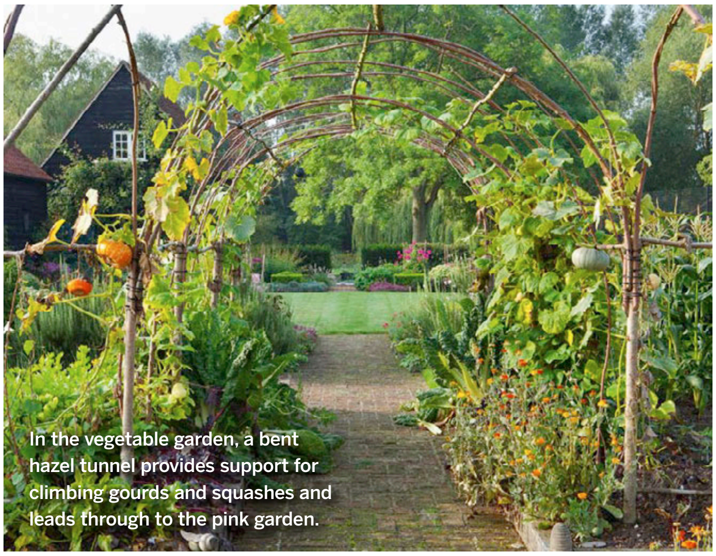
NAME **Ulting Wick.**
WHAT **Old farmyard garden arranged around listed barns.**
WHERE **Near Maldon, Essex.**
SIZE **Eight acres.**
CLIMATE **Exceptionally low rainfall.**
SOIL **Gravel with patches of clay.**
POINTS OF INTEREST **Late summer beds and decorative vegetable garden, large pond and spring garden tulip display.**



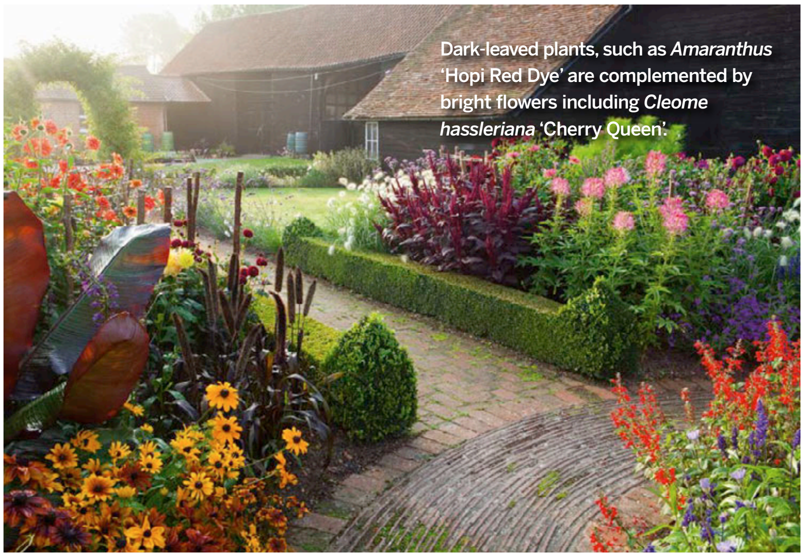
Verbena bonariensis and white *Gaura lindheimeri* 'The Bride' fringe the path with a banana palm as the central focal point.



Archways made by Colchester blacksmith Roger Tatam link individual beds and create a sense of visual continuity.



In the vegetable garden, a bent hazel tunnel provides support for climbing gourds and squashes and leads through to the pink garden.



Dark-leaved plants, such as *Amaranthus* 'Hopi Red Dye' are complemented by bright flowers including *Cleome hassleriana* 'Cherry Queen'.

Ask Philippa Burrough what effect she is trying to achieve in her garden and the answer is unequivocal: "I want people to walk in and say, 'Wow!'," she says. "It's meant to be knockout and I hope it is. This is one of the driest spots in the UK and I just do not have the right conditions to keep a lush high-summer garden going, so now I put all my efforts into two shows a year: one in spring and one in late summer."

By late August the old farmyard garden – an arrangement of four large beds divided by straight brick and gravel paths, against a backdrop of beautifully restored black clapperboard barns – is exploding with colour. Dahlias are the stars of the show, their jewel-like hues shining out in the afternoon sun, with a supporting cast of banana palms, 1.8m-high sunflowers, vivid pink cleomes and rich, coppery-bronze *Ricinus*.

A glance at the list of cultivar names in Philippa's notebooks gives a clue to the vibrant palette: 'Velvet Curtains' and 'Intense Purple' (both amaranthus); 'Crimson Rambler' (*Ipomoea tricolor*); 'Lady in Red' (*Salvia coccinea*) and 'Cherry Queen' (*Cleome hassleriana*). Different cultivars are chosen each year and grown from seed in the greenhouse to give an ever-more dazzling display.

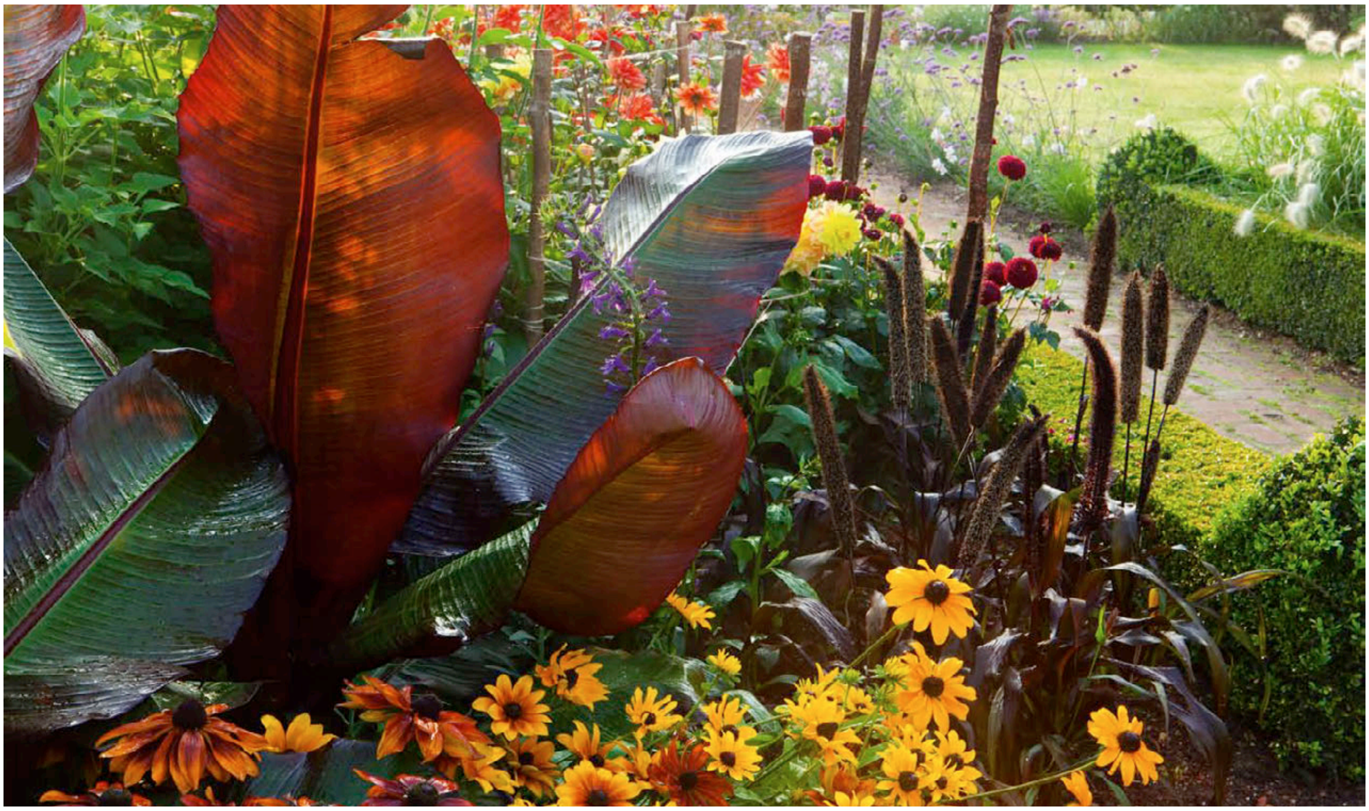
Successes and failures are carefully mulled over with her gardener Chris Horsfall, who came to work with Philippa in 2009 after a head gardener apprenticeship at Cambo in Fife. "We don't have a planting plan; we do it all on the hoof – it takes us about a month to set it all out in late May and we have great fun doing it."

"Certain plants are key," she explains. "I always have *Ricinus communis* for its architectural merit and *Tithonia rotundifolia*, which I love. It is so upright and airy – the orange, daisy-like flowers look great against the black barns and the bees absolutely love it. *Verbena bonariensis* grows like a weed here; we have to hoe it out, and I always have zinnias and various grasses. *Pennisetum thunbergii* 'Red Buttons' is excellent as is *Pennisetum villosum*. Their fluffy heads make a good contrast to the more solid colours of the flowers."

In the adjoining vegetable gardens, which are set out with oak-edged raised beds, interesting squashes are trained over ▷

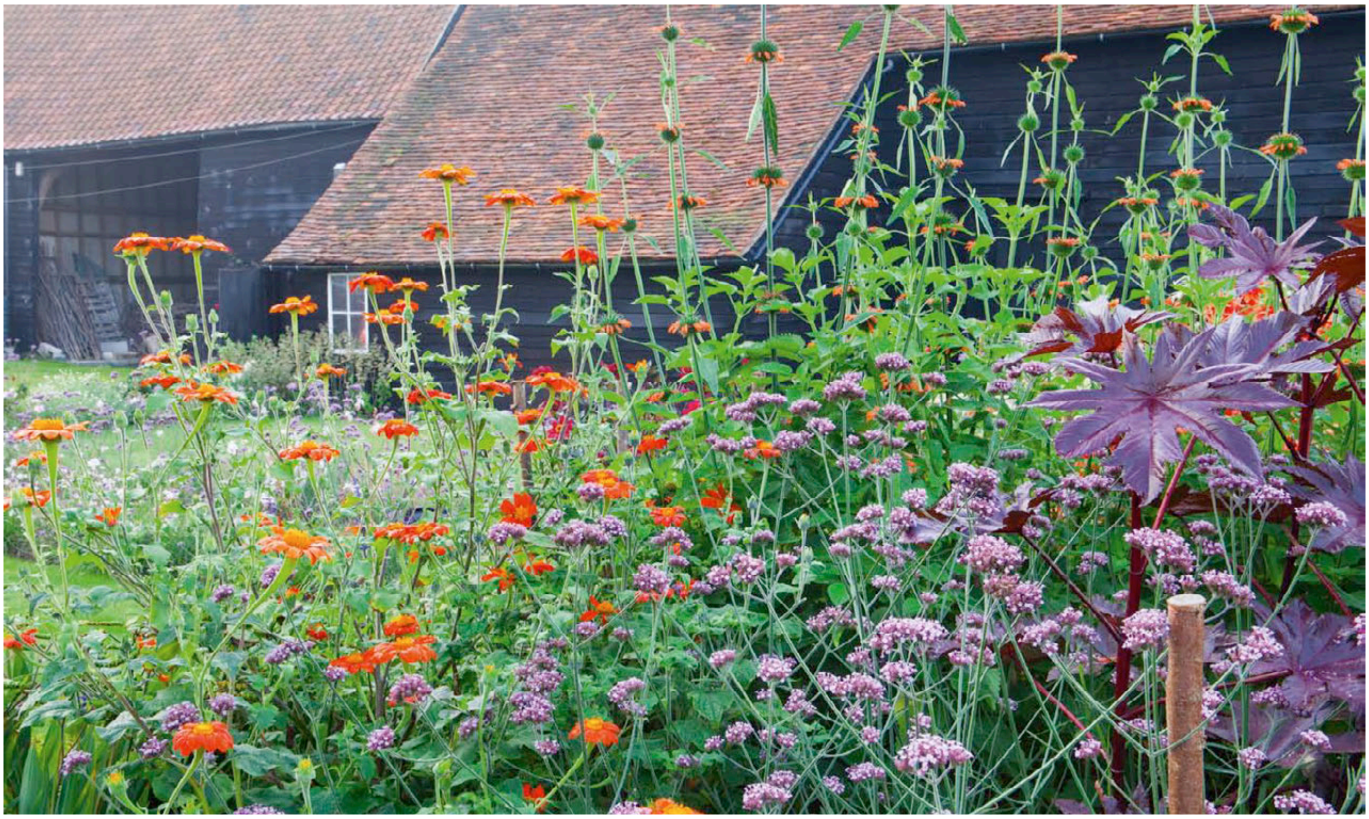
continued on page 40

Inspiring plant combinations from Ulting Wick



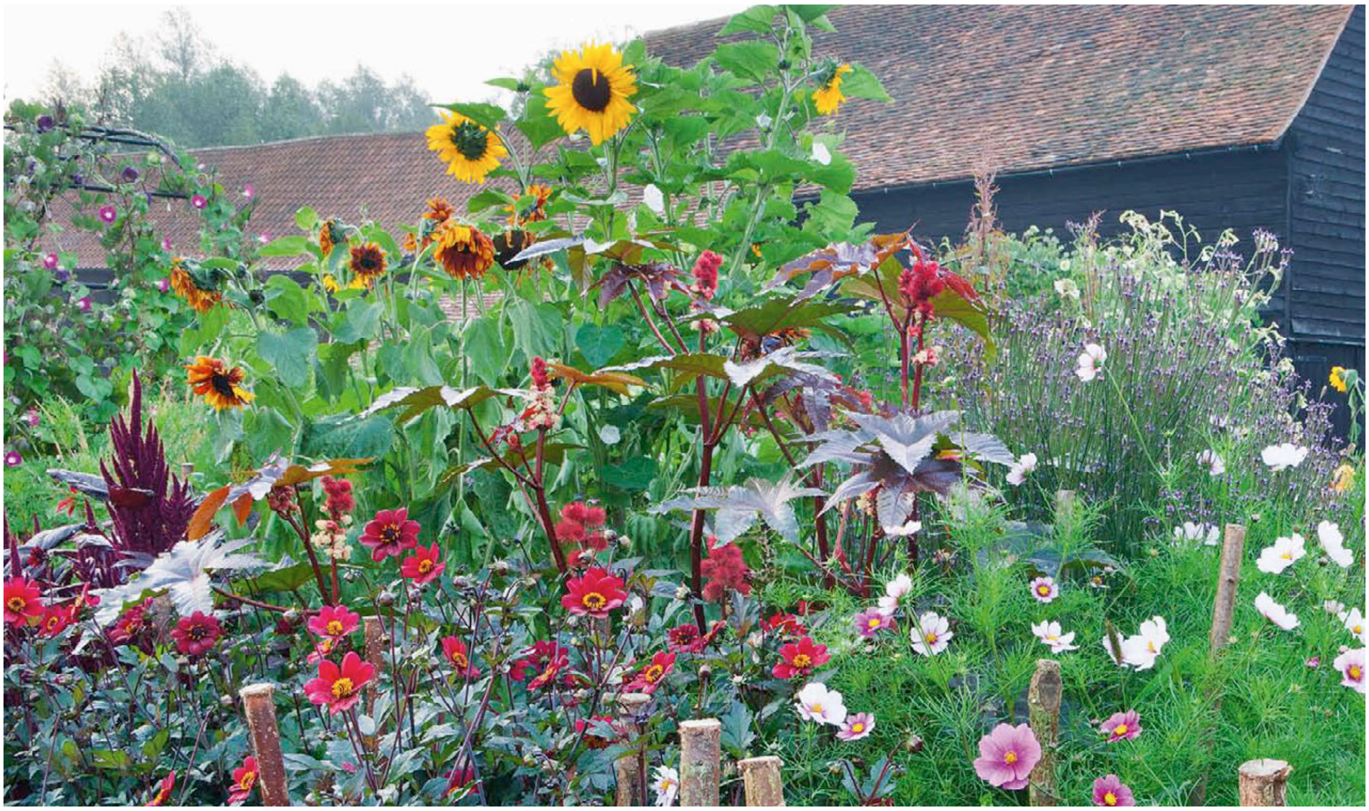
Catching the light

Backlight transforms the old farmyard beds, shining through the handsome, paddle-like leaves of the Abyssinian banana *Ensete ventricosum* 'Maurelii', bringing out their rich, bronze tones. Purple millet *Pennisetum glaucum* 'Purple Majesty', grown from seed in the spring, picks up the same shades. Coneflowers *Rudbeckia hirta* 'Rustic Dwarfs' grows alongside in shades of mahogany, amber and gold, making a vibrant display and a good cut flower too.



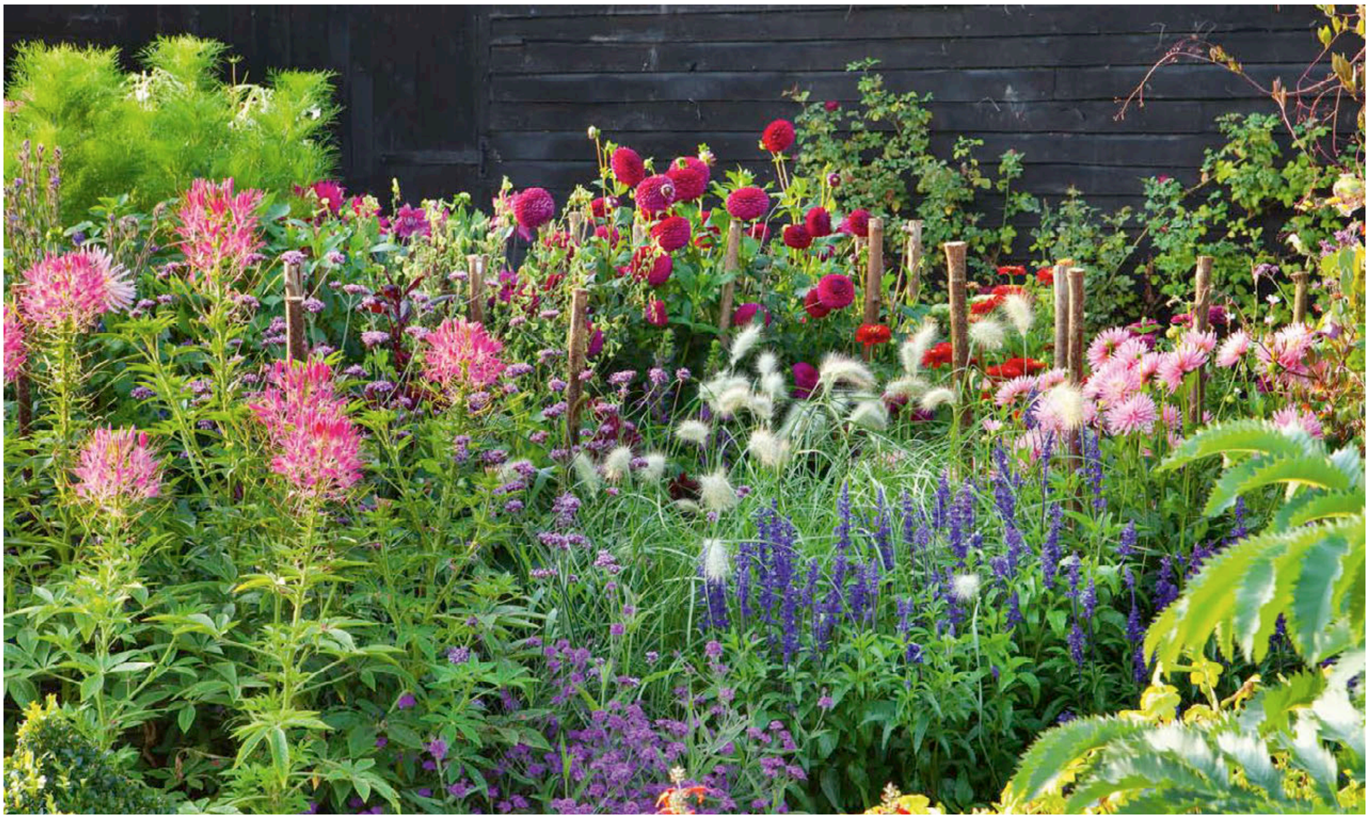
Keeping it transparent

Tall, see-through annuals such as Mexican sunflower (*Tithonia rotundifolia* 'The Torch') and *Leonotis nepetifolia* 'Staircase' play an important role in the late-summer beds, mingling with the equally airy stalwart *Verbena bonariensis*. 'Staircase' lives up to its name with whorls of orange flowers rising in steps up its 1.5m-tall stems. Rich colours stand out well against the black stain of the clapperboard barns.



Architectural vs feathery

Aiming for a good contrast of texture, Philippa and head gardener Chris have placed dark-leaved *Dahlia* 'Bishop of Auckland' – a favourite for its velvety crimson flowers and dark-toned leaves – against the feathery light green foliage of *Cosmos bipinnatus* 'Daydream'. Spires of purple *Verbena hastata* provide vertical interest alongside the sunflowers while *Ricinus* 'New Zealand Purple' gives architectural body to the scheme.



Happy clashes

The planting plan for each of the four farmyard beds changes every year but the colour mix is always unashamedly flamboyant with jewel-like dahlias such as the magenta pompoms of 'Downham Royal' and the semi-cactus, pink 'Park Princess' paired with *Cleome hassleriana* 'Cherry Queen' and rich blue *Salvia farinacea* 'Victoria'. The fluffy white panicles of feathertop *Pennisetum villosum* add softness.

Dahlia 'Inglebrook Jill' reaches over the neatly clipped box hedge, while *Verbena bonariensis* luxuriates on the left.

▷ arched tunnels of bent hazel and in the greenhouse, pots of chillies flourish. Philippa is a keen cook so as well as being decorative, many of these find their way to her kitchen.

Ulting Wick was a working farm until the 1960s. When Philippa and husband Bryan moved here in 1996, they faced barns with unsteady walls and leaking roofs and a yard filled with rubble. Philippa instigated a rolling programme of works: a swimming pool was filled in and a new one built at the far end of the garden; the pond was dredged; a pink and white garden and a spring garden were constructed, then vegetable gardens and a greenhouse. Later came new woodland and a wildflower meadow.

"I wouldn't say design was my strongest skill,' says Philippa, "but I did have some clear ideas of what I wanted, so with help from garden designer Jonathan Pringle, she has achieved a logical and highly charming sequence of interlocking garden spaces.

Prior to taking on Ulting Wick's four acres of garden plus another four of new woodland, Philippa had only owned a tiny London garden, so her learning curve has been steep but exciting. You could say she and the garden have grown up together. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

ADDRESS Ulting Wick, Crouchmans Farm Road, Maldon,
Essex CM9 6QX.
TEL 01245 380216. WEBSITE www.ultingwickgarden.co.uk
OPEN Ulting Wick opens to private groups by appointment and under the National Gardens Scheme. The next NGS open day will be in April 2013. www.ngs.org.uk

9 of Philippa's favourite plants

1 ***Cobaea scandens***
The flowers of the cup and saucer vine, grown from seed and treated as an annual, open greenish-white and turn deep purple.

2 ***Pennisetum villosum***
The soft feathery flower panicles of this perennial grass bring movement to the border and soften the effect of the richly coloured flowers around it.

3 ***Cucurbita* 'Red Kuri'**
This Japanese squash is valued as much for its culinary flavour as for its strong colour. It is one of several squashes Philippa grows over a tunnel of bent hazel.

4 ***Cleome spinosa* 'Cherry Queen'**
This statuesque spider flower has all the wow factor that Philippa wants for a feature plant in the late summer beds. Strong but rather thorny stems.

5 **Ornamental pepper *Capsicum annuum* 'Numex Twilight'**
"A rainbow of chillies on one compact plant," says Philippa. Grows to about 45cm high, it holds its chillies upright and is best grown under cover.

6 ***Cosmos bipinnatus* 'Daydream'**
"Useful for its light green, feathery foliage as much as its flower," says Philippa. It has strongly marked pink and white flowers and grows to around 90cm high.

7 ***Ricinus communis* 'New Zealand Black' (sometimes sold as 'New Zealand Purple')**
"Useful because its flower spikes are dramatic and you don't need to stake it," says Philippa. Its umbrella-like growth means that you can see through to whatever is planted underneath.

8 **Dahlia 'Happy Halloween'**
A robust grower and very floriferous, growing to about 90cm high. Philippa stakes hers with hazel.

9 ***Ensete ventricosum* 'Maurelli'**
When sunlight shines through them, the ribbed, red and green leaves of the Abyssinian banana come to life.

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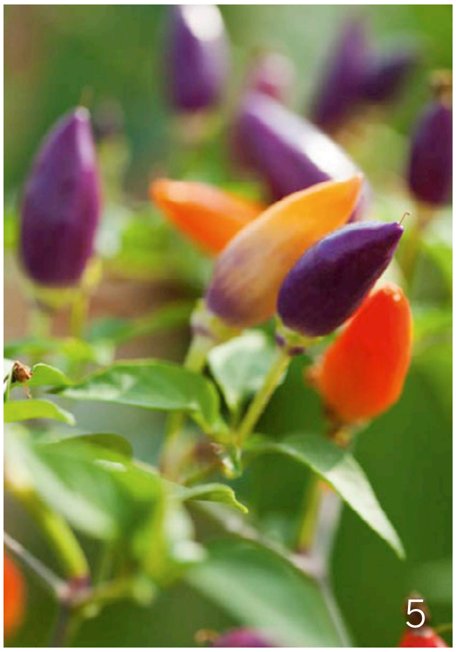
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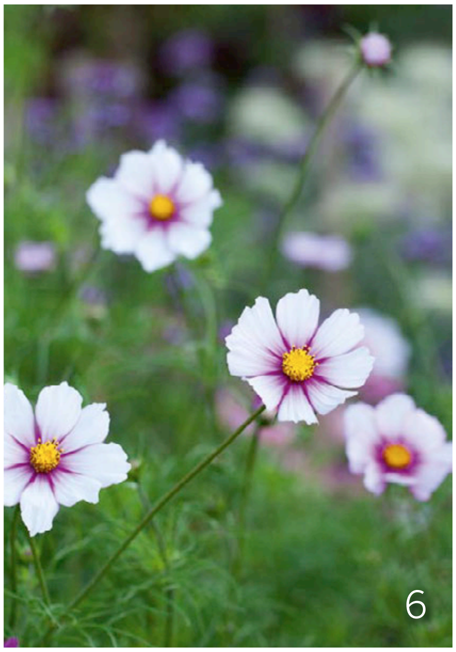
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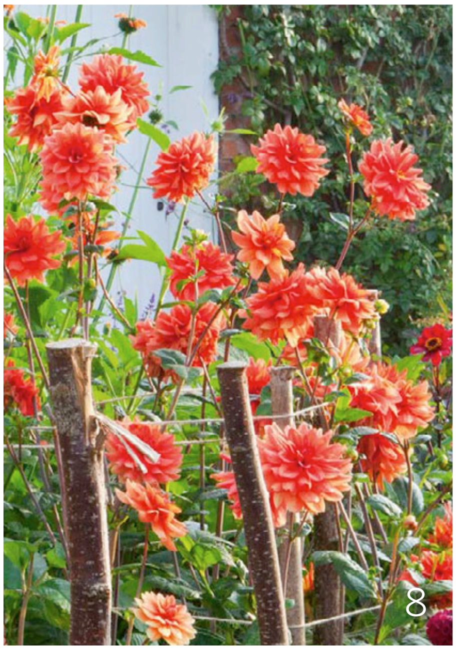
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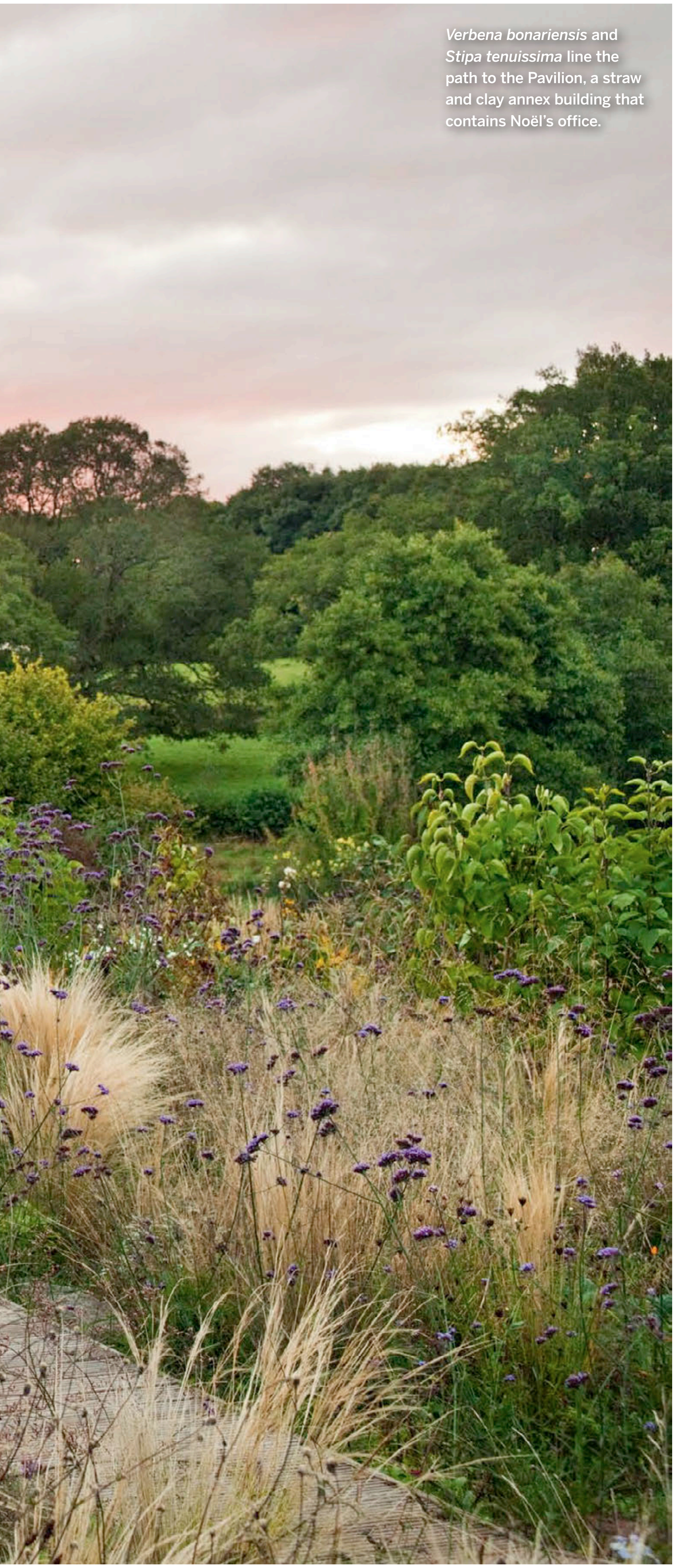
7 JENNY LILLY / GAP PHOTOS

In brief

NAME **Montpelier Cottage.**
WHERE **Brilley, Herefordshire.**
SIZE **One-acre garden and trial beds, three acres of hay meadow and wildflower-rich wet meadow.**
CLIMATE **The garden is at 150 metres, but sheltered from predominant winds by trees. High rainfall, winter frosts collect in pockets.**
SOIL **Deep, fertile red sandstone.**
POINTS OF INTEREST **A fusion of cottage garden style with perpetual planting more commonly used in German parks.**



Verbena bonariensis and *Stipa tenuissima* line the path to the Pavilion, a straw and clay annex building that contains Noël's office.

Where the wild things are

In a small corner of Herefordshire, Noël Kingsbury has created a masterpiece of informality

WORDS **HELENA ATTLEE** PHOTOGRAPHS **ANDREA JONES**

If you're a regular reader of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED you're probably familiar with photographs of Noël Kingsbury's smiling face, and his articles about plants and other people's gardens. But have you ever wondered what his own garden is like? To find out, you'd have to take the steep lane that leads to a cottage in the hills above Hay-on-Wye in Herefordshire, where Noël has been living with his wife Jo Eliot for seven years.

When they arrived there was a small garden next to the cottage, and a paddock on gently sloping ground at the bottom of the four-acre site. The soil is a deep and fertile red sandstone, the garden is sheltered from the prevailing wind, and winter frosts tend to roll off the sloping site.

Noël is no ordinary gardener. He had two priorities in those early days. The first wasn't unusual – he needed to make a home for a van-full of plants from their last garden. But he also had to create an experimental area for his ongoing research into planting combinations and competition between plants. The south-facing slope below the cottage was divided into two areas, one dedicated to nursery beds and research plots, and the other to an ornamental garden. ▷

> *"Straight lines aren't a good beginning for a naturalistic look, but he encouraged the plants to spread into the spaces between the rows, to intermingle, cross-pollinate and self-seed"*

▷ Noël began by turning a three to four-metre swathe of the sloping lawn into an ornamental border that tumbles down the hillside towards the wild garden at its base. Here he set the plants from his old garden in straight rows and in no particular order. The one-metre space between the rows made for easy weeding, but Noël is no disciplinarian, quite the contrary. His aim was to create a bio-diverse, low-maintenance border so naturalistic that it looked as if it had happened of its own accord. Straight lines aren't a good beginning for a naturalistic look, but he encouraged the plants to spread into the spaces between the rows, to intermingle, cross-pollinate and self-seed as they chose, and now the plant canopy is so dense that it suppresses the weeds.

If you've ever agonised over a planting plan in your own garden, you won't be pleased to know that those arbitrarily ordered rows of plants have evolved into a bio-diverse mosaic of striking combinations and effects produced by the plants growing into and through each other.

Letting things go

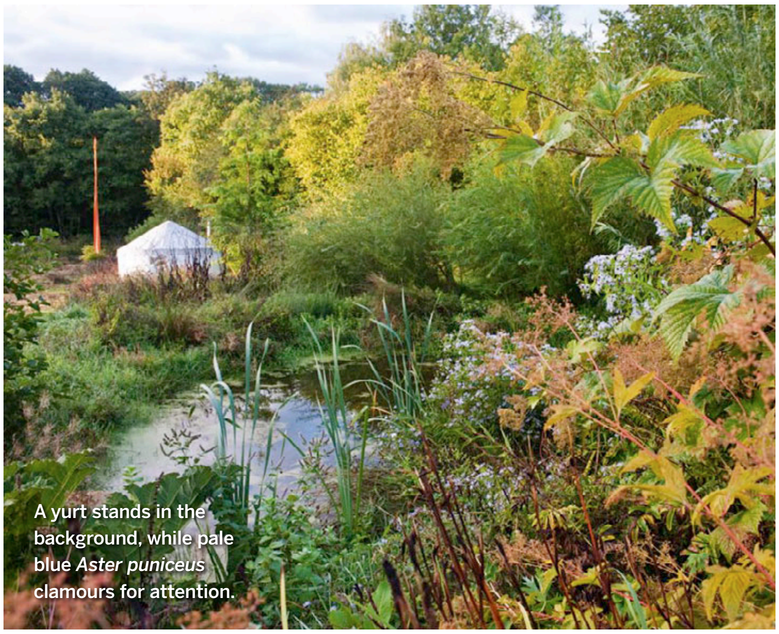
He doesn't pretend his approach is new. "It's simply a version of Margery Fish's cottage garden style," he says, "a question of letting things go and managing the results." Geraniums want to dominate the scene, but in early summer, when their pink flowers push up among the lance-shaped, purple leaves of fringed loosestrife *Lysimachia ciliata*, no one is going to complain about that.

There's also evidence of Noël's extensive travels, for example he has propagated the seed of *Senecio nemorensis* collected in Bulgaria, and in late summer its yellow flower heads and fine, densely serrated leaves combine with many cultivars of aster.

The ornamental garden gives way seamlessly to the wild garden lower down the slope. Noel is always interested in the relationship between plants, and the extent to which they compete with each other. "Down here I let very robust herbaceous species fight it out among themselves," he explains. He encourages *Crocosmia* 'Lucifer' to make wonderful splashes ▷

Diverse planting of perennials and self-seeded annuals cover the sloped garden.

Noël's aim is for the garden to be low maintenance and he encourages plants to intermingle.


A yurt stands in the background, while pale blue *Aster puniceus* clamours for attention.

3 nurseries that Noël recommends

Cotswold Garden Flowers
Nurseryman Bob Brown offers an excellent choice of perennials and useful descriptions.
Cotswold Garden Flowers, Sands Lane, Badsey, Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 7EZ.
Tel 01386 833849, www.cgf.net

Phoenix Perennial Plants
Expert plantswoman Marina Christopher specialises in unusual plants.
Phoenix Perennial Plants, Paice Lane, Medstead, Alton, Hampshire GU34 5PR. Tel 01420 560695

Sampford Shrubs
A plantsman's nursery propagating and growing a wide range of hardy plants.
Sampford Shrubs, Sampford Peverell, Tiverton, Devon EX16 7EN. Tel 01884 821164, www.samshrub.co.uk

Blue *Aster* x *frikartii* 'Mönch' and towering hollyhock *Alcea rosea* contribute to this naturalistic plant palette.

The view from the trial beds towards the Pavilion, with the yellow species of *Solidago rugosa* standing out in the massed perennial plantings.

▷ of scarlet in the long grass, and Queen Anne's thistle *Cirsium canum* produces striking rosettes of fleshy green leaves and pink flowers.

Noël is always experimenting with new methods of managing the garden, and he has found that strimming the wild garden to ground level in winter and setting fire to it in early spring eliminates weed seeds and seedlings. "A lot of traditional European upland meadows are managed by a spring burn," he explains, although he's anxious to stress that flash fires are not a good idea in urban gardens, or on ground planted with bulbs.

Most of the garden slopes, so the beds can be viewed from a number of different perspectives. "This garden is all about looking through, looking over, looking under, and all the other, different ways of looking," Noël says. And as he strides ahead, pausing occasionally to pull up a weed or examine a line of young plants in the nursery beds, it strikes me that his approach to gardening is a different way of looking as well. In Noël's garden the plants are in charge. He intervenes as little as possible, because it's their natural performance that fascinates him. He notes their strengths and weaknesses, the extent to which they can compete with other plants, and puts all of this information towards his long-term goal of developing a planting style that is ornamental but also naturalistic, bio-diverse and easy to maintain. ◻

USEFUL INFORMATION

ADDRESS Montpelier Cottage, Brilley, Whitney-on-Wye, Hereford, Herefordshire HR3 6HF WEBSITE www.noelkingsbury.com
OPEN Montpelier Cottage garden will be open for the National Garden Scheme in 2013, and by arrangement.
Email noel@noelkingsbury.com

9 long-lived perennials

Noël finds that some perennial plants live longer than others. The following are long-lived and competitive.

1 ***Helianthus* 'Lemon Queen'**
A bushy, back-of-the-border perennial sunflower that is robust but not overspreading. Covered in pale yellow, daisy-like flowers 1.8m tall in late summer. Prefers full sun and does well in poor soil.

2 ***Aster* 'Little Carlow' *(cordifolius hybrid)***
For Noel, this is the best aster. Masses of violet-blue daisies with yellow centres from August to October. Prefers moist, moderately fertile soil and partial shade.

3 ***Filipendula camtschatica***
An extremely robust plant for wet ground. Good foliage and panicles of frothy, white to pale pink flowers from June to September. Easily grown in any good, moist soil in sun or shade. Grows to 2m.

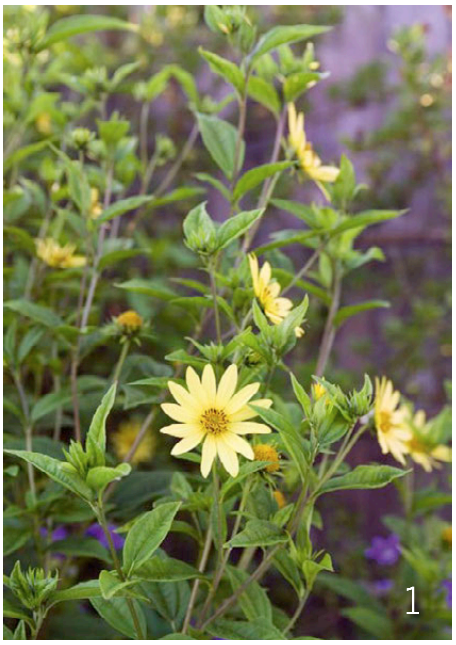
4 ***Calamagrostis brachytricha***
This forms a dense clump 60-80cm high, with purple flower plumes from August to October, which will persist into winter. Full sun or partial shade. Do not overwater.

5 ***Eupatorium fistulosum***
Can grow to 3.5m and produce domes of dusty-mauve flowers on towering stems. Grows in moist soil.

6 ***Aconitum fischeri* var. *arcuatum***
In cultivation this clambers through shrubs and small trees to almost 2m. Very good for August, when it bears quantities of deep purple-blue helmet-like flowers. Sun or shade in well-drained soil.

7 ***Phlomis russeliana***
Hairy perennial grows to 90cm and has large grey-green leaves. Stout stems bear whorls of hooded, soft yellow flowers 3cm in length. Grow in fertile, well-drained soil in full sun or partial shade.

8 ***Rudbeckia fulgida***
A reliable rudbeckia with a compact habit and a height of only 60cm. It produces black-eyed, single, yellow daisy flowers from mid-summer right through to mid-autumn. Will tolerate light shade.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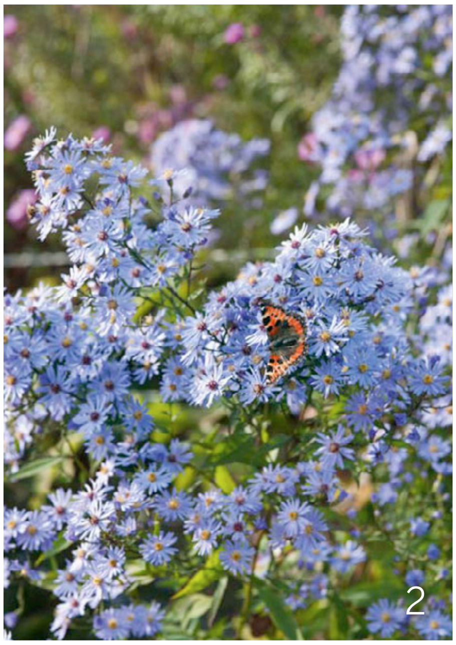
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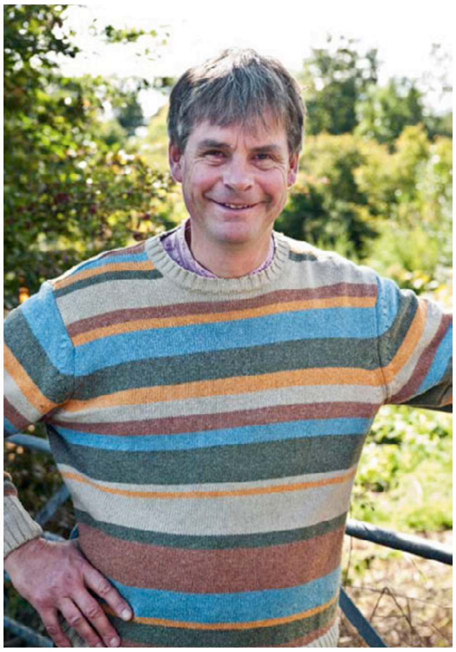

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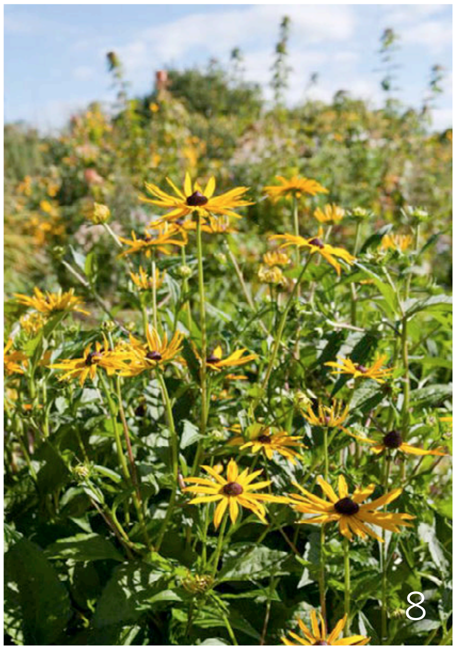
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3 CORA NIELE / GARDEN WORLD IMAGES

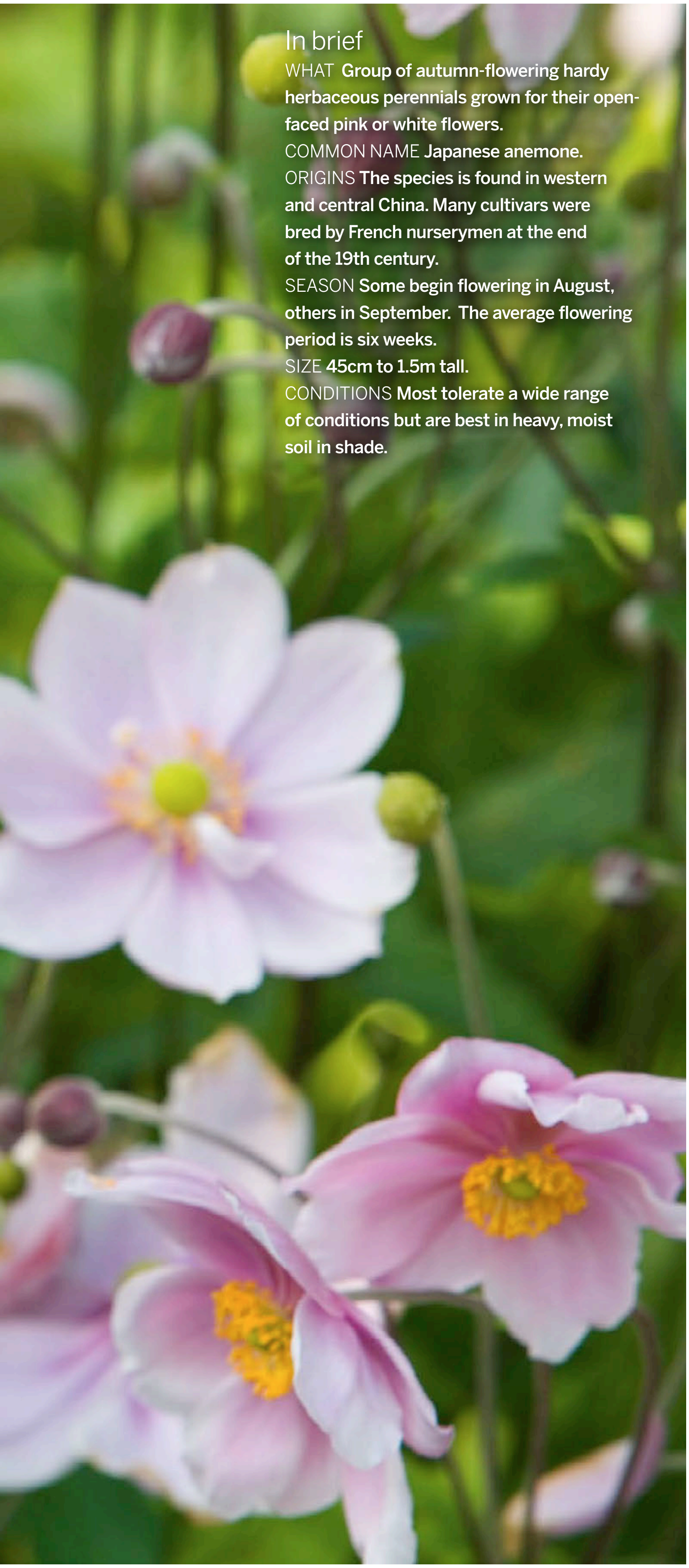
***ANEMONE* X**
***HYBRIDA* 'ELEGANS'**
Floriferous form that has lots of flowers through September and October. A vigorous coloniser. The same plant as the incorrectly named *A.* x *hybrida* 'Max Vogel'. Typical height (H) 1.2m. AGM*

*AGM – holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society

Japanese anemones

These deceptively tough wonders combine hardiness with beauty, giving your borders a glow of summer amid the autumn shadows

WORDS **JOHN HOYLAND**



In brief

WHAT **Group of autumn-flowering hardy herbaceous perennials grown for their open-faced pink or white flowers.**

COMMON NAME **Japanese anemone.**

ORIGINS **The species is found in western and central China. Many cultivars were bred by French nurserymen at the end of the 19th century.**

SEASON **Some begin flowering in August, others in September. The average flowering period is six weeks.**

SIZE **45cm to 1.5m tall.**

CONDITIONS **Most tolerate a wide range of conditions but are best in heavy, moist soil in shade.**

DAVE ZUBRASKI / GAP PHOTOS

John Hoyland is nurseryman and owner of Pioneer Plants in Letchworth, and a regular feature writer for .

Turn to page 101 for our special offer on Japanese anemones

The plantsman and writer EA Bowles managed to combine the mind of a scientist with the soul of a poet. "There is a charm in the simple form of a single anemone that goes straight to my heart," he wrote. Although he was writing about spring-flowering anemones, the autumn-flowering species have the same charm and, as Bowles' contemporary Vita Sackville-West pointed out, their flowers bring an echo of spring into the dark days of autumn.

Commonly known as Japanese anemones, autumn-flowering anemones are tough plants with bold foliage and delicate five-petalled flowers that spring from strong, slender stems. The leaves tend to be broad and lobed, bright green when they first appear and dull, deep green by the time the plant flowers, even before which time the tight buds that balance on the tops of the stems look attractive. I have heard people say that they would be happy just to have the buds. That, though, would be to miss out on the greater part of the plant's beauty. Some varieties have double flowers and some a second row of petals but, for me, nothing matches the elegance of the single-flowered forms. One of their common names is windflower; although harsh winds may scatter the flowers' petals, the plant is rarely blown over in the way of those other stalwarts of the autumn border, dahlias, asters and chrysanthemums.

Although the double flowered Japanese anemones now called *Anemone hupehensis* var. *japonica* have been naturalised in Japan for centuries, the parent species, *Anemone hupehensis*, is native to western and central China. In 1784 the Swede Carl Per Thunberg became the first to describe these double flowered plants and the Scottish plant collector Robert Fortune brought plants back from Japan in 1860. The single flowered species *Anemone hupehensis* was however not described until 1910 by the French nurseryman Victor Lemoine.

The cultivar that is still the most beautiful of the group, now called *A.* x ▷

> *“Autumn-flowering anemones deservedly dominate many gardens in late summer and the autumn”*

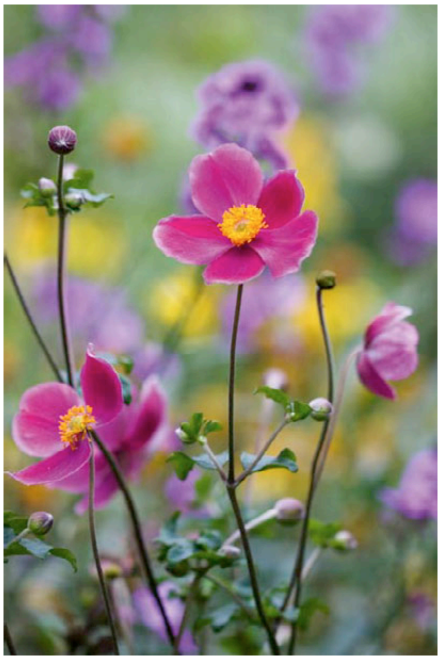
▷ *hybrida* ‘Honorine Jobert’ (pictured page 59), brings as much allure to majestic double borders as it does to barren back yards, and I’ve seen it growing happily in both. The fat buds have a pink sheen, but open to pure white saucer-shaped flowers that are enhanced by a green centre surrounded by a corolla of golden stamens. The flowers are given added substance by a double row of petals. It’s unusual for a cultivar of an herbaceous perennial to remain popular for over 150 years, so it’s a testament to ‘Honorine Jobert’ that the plant is still widely grown and admired.

The majority of autumn-flowering anemones that are grown in British gardens belong to two groups: *A. hupehensis* and *A.* x *hybrida*. *A. hupehensis* and its forms tend to begin flowering at the beginning of August and are rarely more than 1m tall. The flowers are in strong, vivid colours and the reverse of the petals often have a grey sheen. *A.* x *hybrida* flower four to six weeks later than *A. hupehensis* and are much taller, typically growing to 1.2-1.5m tall. Their flowers tend to be pale and their habit more rampant than the earlier-flowering forms.

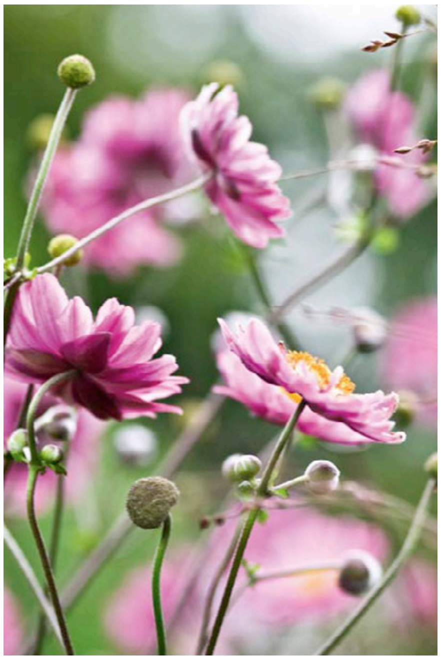
You will find these plants being sold under all sorts of names in nurseries and garden centres, including the now-obsolete *A. japonica*. In 1947 EA Bowles joined forces with the botanist William Stearn to publish a description of the origin and naming of autumn-flowering anemones, information that is still filtering through to plant growers.

Autumn-flowering anemones deservedly dominate many gardens in late summer and the autumn. Most will flower throughout August, September and October and some varieties will flower later into November. They bring into the last few weeks of the flowering year the gaiety and brilliance of summer. ◻

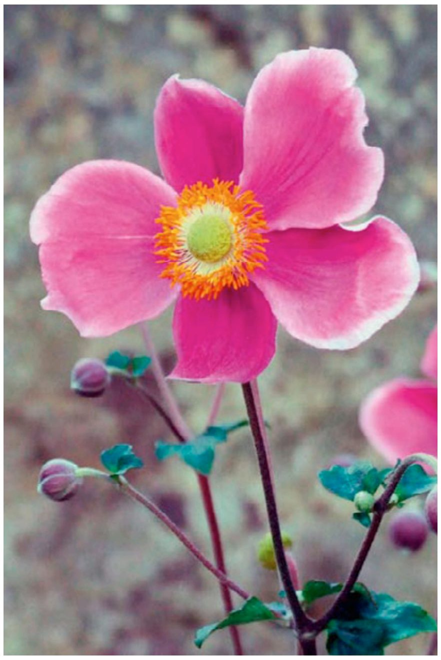
• John’s pick of Japanese anemones continues over the next six pages. ▷



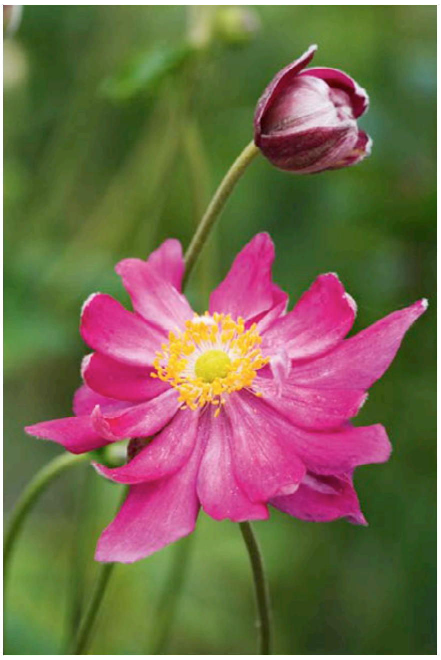
***ANEMONE HUPEHENSIS* ‘PRAECOX’**
As its name suggests, this is an early flowering cultivar that starts to flower at the beginning of August and finishes at the end of September. The plant forms a neat dome. H 60cm.



***A. HUPEHENSIS* ‘EUGENIE’**
Several rows of narrow, slightly twisted tepals that form an upward-facing flat disk. Very vigorous so in most gardens will need to be regularly controlled. H 80cm.

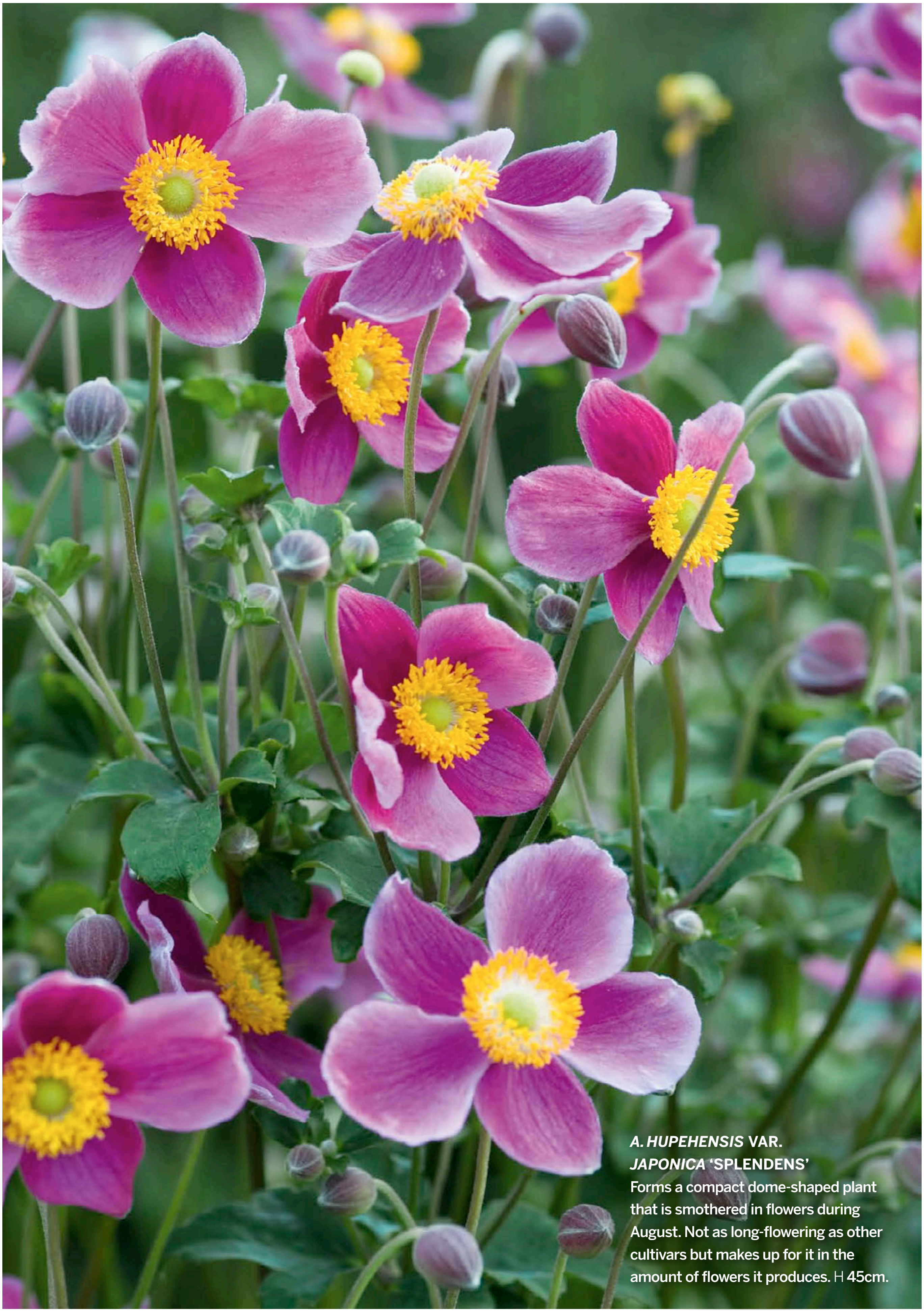


***A. HUPEHENSIS* ‘BOWLES PINK’**
An unusual flower that has two outer tepals that are smaller and darker than the inner ones. Named after the genus’ greatest ambassador, EA Bowles. H 100cm. AGM



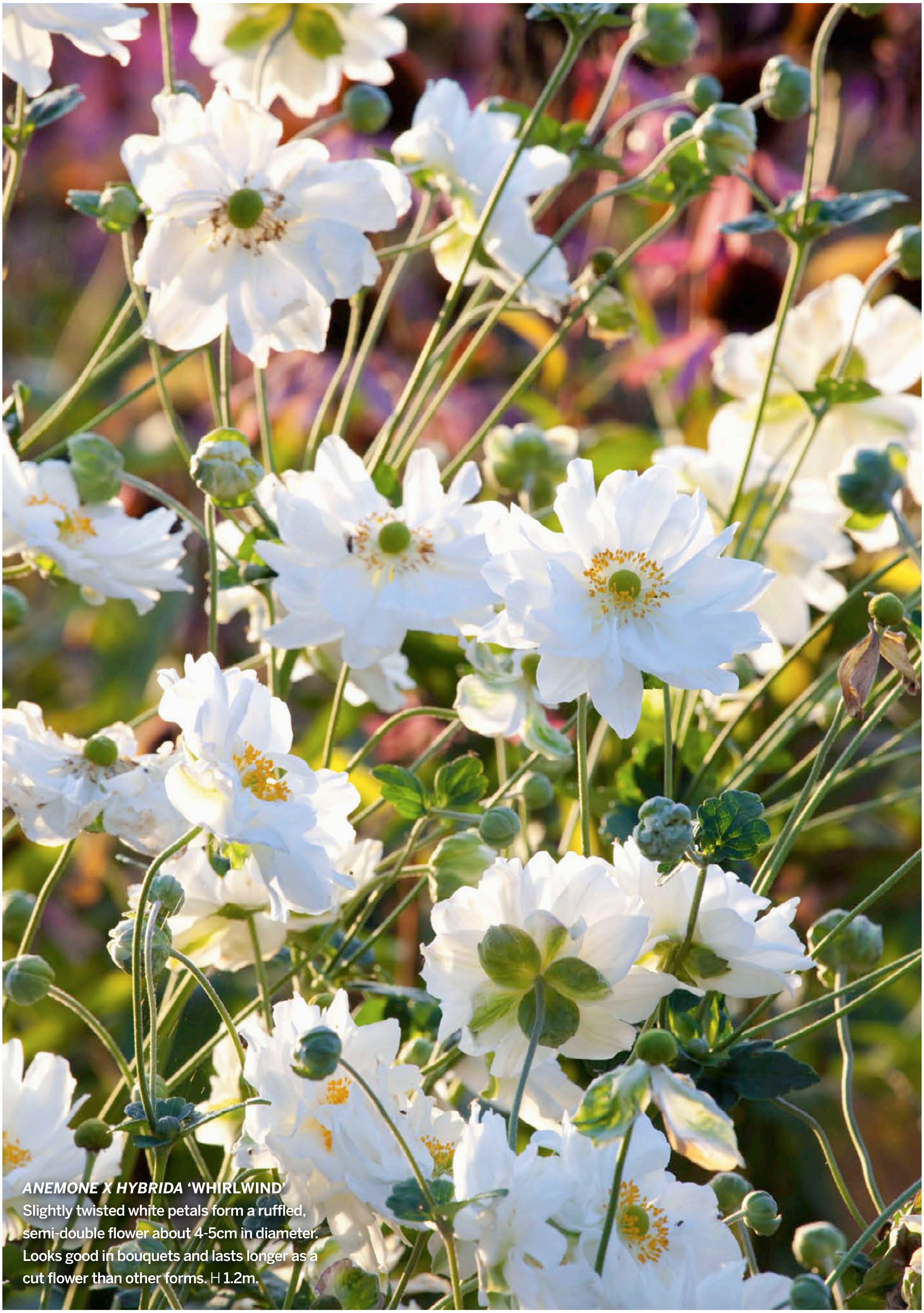
***A. HUPEHENSIS* VAR. *JAPONICA* ‘BODNANT BURGUNDY’**
Initially the darkest flowers of the group but they fade quickly. The narrow tepals are not a uniform length. H 75cm.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: GAP PHOTOS. FRANÇOIS DE HEEL / GARDEN PICTURE LIBRARY / GETTY IMAGES. FIONA MCLEOD / GAP PHOTOS. M&N / ALAMY



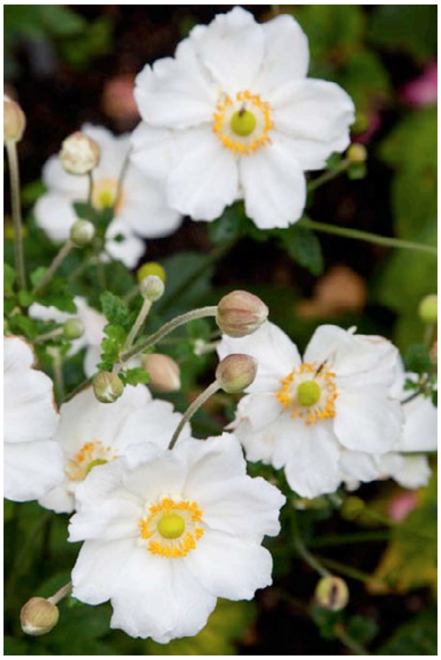
A. HUPEHENSIS VAR. JAPONICA 'SPLENDENS'
Forms a compact dome-shaped plant that is smothered in flowers during August. Not as long-flowering as other cultivars but makes up for it in the amount of flowers it produces. H 45cm.

JOHN MARTIN / GARDENWORLDIMAGES.COM

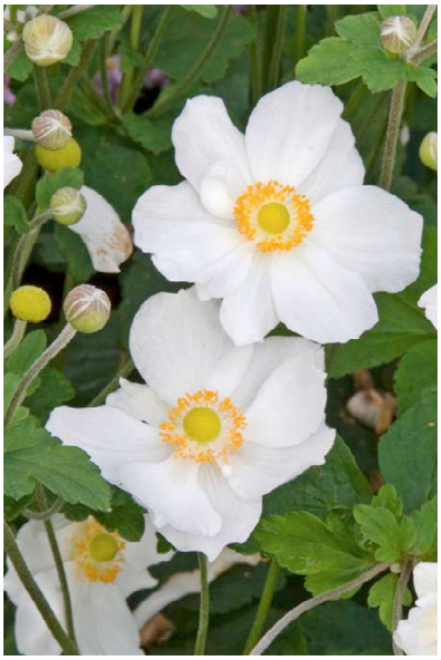


***ANEMONE X HYBRIDA* 'WHIRLWIND'**
Slightly twisted white petals form a ruffled, semi-double flower about 4-5cm in diameter. Looks good in bouquets and lasts longer as a cut flower than other forms. H 1.2m.

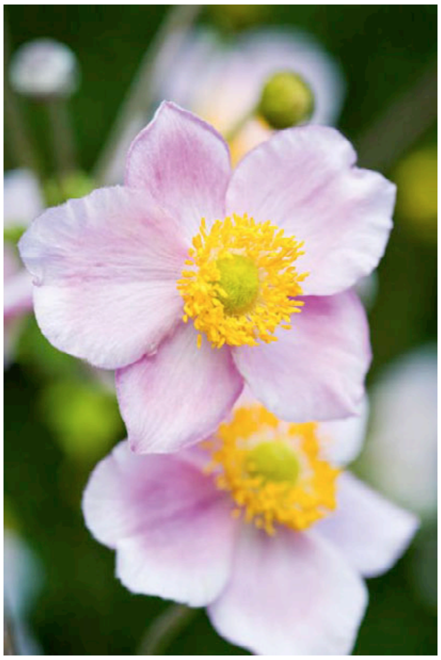
ELKE BORKOWSKI / GAP PHOTOS



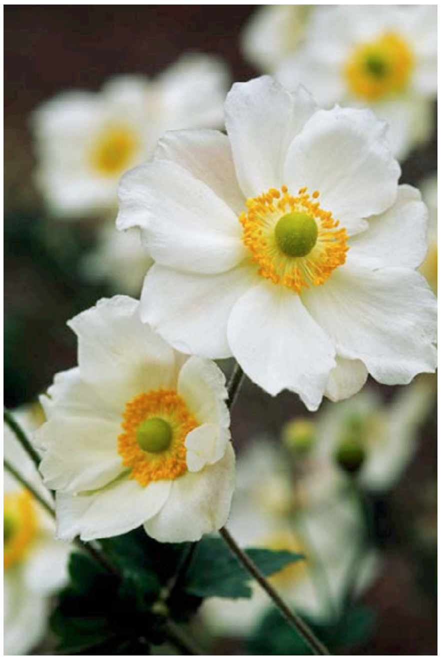
A. X *HYBRIDA* 'HONORINE JOBERT'
Pristine white, cleanly cut petals and clear yellow stamens make the flowers the best of the white forms of the autumn-flowering anemones. H1.5m. AGM



A. X *HYBRIDA* 'ANDREA ATKINSON'
Long flowering period from August through to the end of October. Of the white-flowered forms this has the largest flowers, 5-6cm in diameter. H100cm.



A. X *HYBRIDA* 'LORELEY'
Probably one of the longest-flowering of the anemones, starting at the beginning of August and continuing through October. The pale silver pink flowers do not fade. H100cm.



A. X *HYBRIDA* 'COUPE D'ARGENT'
Bred in France in the 1890s and much more popular there than in Britain. The flower has an extra row of tepals. It is an imposing and vigorous plant. H1.2m.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MICHAEL HOWES / GAP PHOTOS, LEE THOMAS / GARDENWORLDIMAGES.COM, HOWARD RICE / GAP PHOTOS, MARK BOLTON / GAP PHOTOS

Cultivation

- In the wild *Anemone hupehensis* grows in well-drained, alkaline soil in a cool situation, which has high summer rainfall. In the garden, then, their ideal situation is one that offers that implausible yet much sought after condition of soil that is moist at the same time as being well-drained. They thrive in light shade but will also grow in full sun where the soil is moist during the summer. The height to which plants grow varies dramatically with soil conditions. In poor, dry soil in a sunny border I have seen *A.* x *hybrida* 'Honorine Jobert' flowering at less than one metre tall. In rich, moist soil it will reach up to 1.5m tall.

- Newly planted anemones take a few months to settle down and can sometimes be shy to flower in their first year. Make sure that during their first summer they are well watered. Once established, they are not so diffident and their woody roots can spread quickly. Fortunately, they are not deep-rooted plants and, if you catch them when they are young, they are easy to pull out. Again, EA Bowles had plenty to say on the subject and writes that they are 'so lovely that I cannot bring myself to root any of it out'. Lovely or not, most of us can't afford to be as reticent as Mr Bowles, otherwise our gardens would be overrun with the plant. Some forms are more vigorous than others. In particular, I have found that *A.* x *hybrida* 'Robustissima' needs to be controlled annually to keep it in its allotted space.

Planting companions

- The foliage of Japanese anemones is slow to appear in the spring, so good companions are perennials that are quick off the mark in the early spring. Hellebores, of course, will grow well among anemones but also *Brunnera macrophylla* and *Pulmonaria* will be happy to be shaded over by the later growth of the anemones. If the anemones are growing in a sunny place, spring-flowering bulbs can be planted around them. Alliums, particularly *Allium cristophii* and *Allium schubertii*, will grow well and look spectacular against the anemone's foliage.

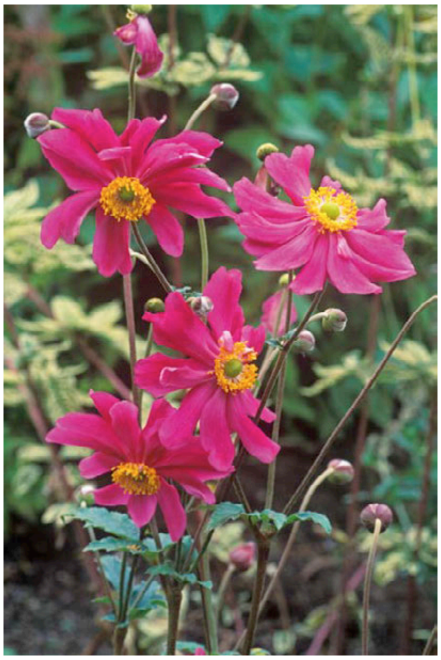
- Tall yew hedges provide the perfect dark-green background to the dazzling white flowers of *A.* x *hybrida* 'Honorine Jobert'. I have seen a fence covered with the blue-green foliage and bright red hips of *Rosa glauca* used as a background for the same plant. Varieties with pale pink flowers also look stunning against this rose.

Where to see

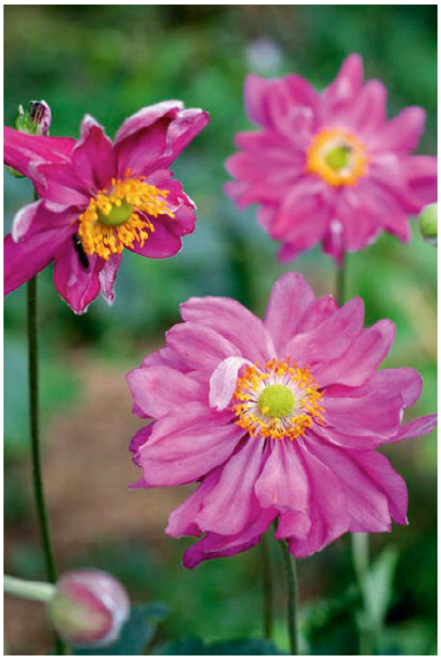
The national collection is held by Hadlow College near Sevenoaks in Kent. Go to the website www.nccpg.com for more details on visiting times.

Suppliers

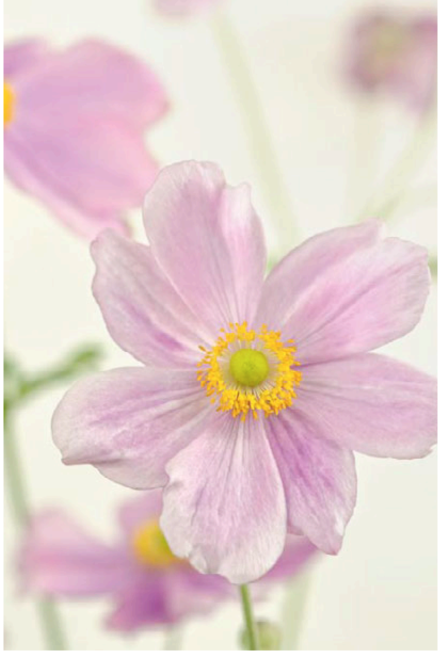
- The Beth Chatto Gardens, Elmstead Market, Essex CO7 7DB. Tel 01206 822007, www.bethchattoshop.co.uk
- Hopleys Plants, Much Hadham, Hertfordshire SG10 6BU. Tel 01279 842509, www.hopleys.co.uk
- Larch Cottage Nurseries, Penrith, Cumbria CA10 2DR. Tel 01931 712404, www.larchcottage.co.uk



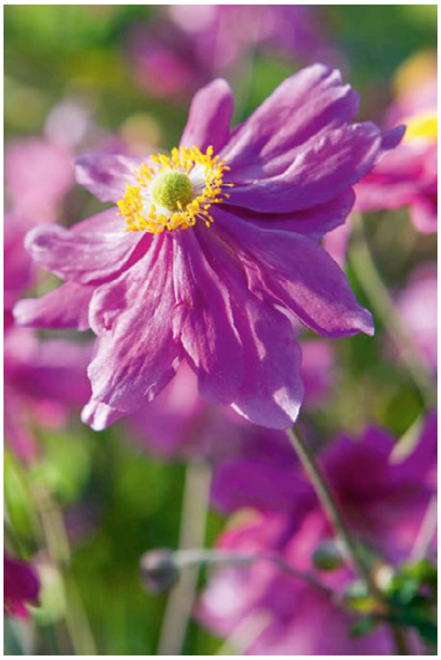
***ANEMONE HUPEHENSIS* VAR. *JAPONICA* 'ROTKÄPPCHEN'**
Many European cultivars have deep-colours. The tepals on this one are almost red and retain colour through their season. H 50cm.



***A. HUPEHENSIS* VAR. *JAPONICA* 'BRESSINGHAM GLOW'**
Bred by Alan Bloom and first sold by his nursery in 1968. The flowers are a strong deep pink, becoming pale as they age. H 45cm.

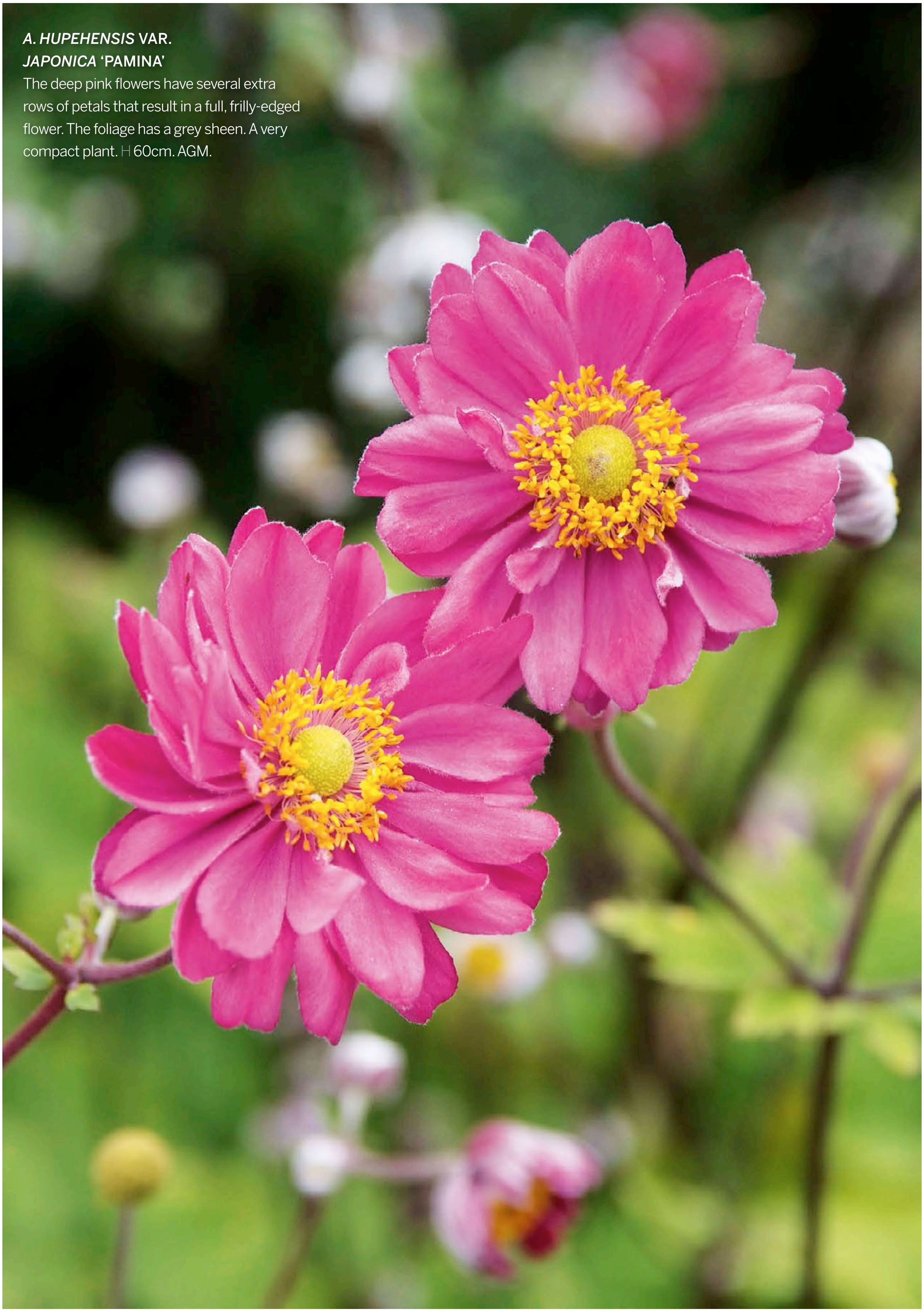


***A.* X *HYBRIDA* 'LADY GILMOUR'**
For many years this was known as *A.* x *hybrida* 'Crispa' because of the crinkled, parsley-like edging of the leaves. The plant often reverts to plain foliage. H 75cm.



***A. HUPEHENSIS* VAR. *JAPONICA* 'PRINZ HEINRICH'**
Bred in the early 1900s. The semi-double flowers are a deep cerise-pink that fade as they age. H 100cm. AGM.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: RICHARD BLOOM / GAP PHOTOS, MARTIN HUGHES-JONES / GARDEN WORLD IMAGES, MARIANNE MAJERUS, CORA NIELE / GETTY IMAGES



A. *HUPEHENSIS* VAR. *JAPONICA* 'PAMINA'
The deep pink flowers have several extra rows of petals that result in a full, frilly-edged flower. The foliage has a grey sheen. A very compact plant. H 60cm. AGM.

MAP/NATHALIE PASQUEL / GARDENWORLDIMAGES.COM

Jim Arbury

A life spent devoted to the gardens at RHS Wisley has produced one of Britain's foremost fruit experts

WORDS **JODIE JONES** PHOTOGRAPH **CHARLIE HOPKINSON**

There is a photograph of Jim Arbury at the age of two, sowing seeds in a pot of compost with small but determined fingers. Today, 50 years later, he is the fruit and trials specialist at Royal Horticultural Society garden Wisley, where he has worked since 1982, and he can't remember a time when he didn't want to garden.

Jim was born just down the road from Wisley, in Cobham, with gardening in his blood. His father's father was head gardener on a large private estate, as was his great grandfather on his mother's side.

At school he was an enthusiastic member of the gardening club, and at weekends he helped on his father's allotment. Whenever he could, he ducked off to play in a derelict orchard that belonged to his mother's uncles. "I suppose that was where I first got interested in fruit trees," he says. "The orchard was sold off long ago and is now a car park, but I can still remember where particular trees once stood."

> *"You don't need to bother with all these fancy superfruits. Gooseberries are delicious, and good for you too"*

He went to the University of Sheffield to study botany and geography, but in the holidays he would come back and work at Wisley, helping out with anything from fruit picking to summer pruning. And after graduation he started work there full-time. To this day, he has never worked anywhere else, and for most of his time at Wisley he has been devoted to the fruit collection.

"I suppose I am drawn to the idea of growing something you are going to use, and I have always been very interested in the technical side – in fact, at one stage I could have got into the research side of horticulture, but I like being outdoors too much."

Instead, Jim has combined his academic inclinations with 30 years of hands-on cultivation to become one of the foremost fruit experts in the country. He has written several books on plums and pears, countless articles, and he gives talks and demonstrations around the country.

At this time of year he holds Fruit Identification Days, where his ability to name unknown apple cultivars draws hordes of confused fruit tree owners. "I do enjoy those days," he says. "And I don't often fail to come up with an identification. People think you go by the colour or the flavour, but I'm much more likely to look at other details first – the nature of the eye of the apple, the stalk cavity, the internal characteristics.

"It has taken me a long time to acquire the knowledge, and it would have been very hard work if I'd just set out to learn it all in one go. But I've picked it up gradually over the years." He certainly had a fertile training ground in which to learn. The fruit grounds at Wisley contain 700 apple cultivars, 175 different pears and 100 plums, as well as quinces, cobnuts, medlars and mulberries.

In addition, Wisley is home to the National Collection of 170 gooseberries, a neglected fruit which Jim is keen to champion. "You don't need to bother with all these fancy superfruits. Gooseberries are delicious, and good for you too."

After so many years devoted to just one place, it is not surprising that much of his life is bound up with it. He even met his wife here, when she travelled from Poland to study at the gardens. And, as a keen beekeeper, much of his spare time is spent back at Wisley, tending four hives he keeps in the orchard.

"I can't really imagine working anywhere else," he says. "Wisley is such a wonderful place to learn, because you are surrounded by experts. And the range of fruit would be hard to match anywhere else.

"We have some fascinating cultivars here, including 'Old Pearmain', which is the first recorded apple cultivar, noted in court papers as growing in the time of Edward I in 1204. We also have 'Court Pondu Plait', which may well be an even older apple cultivar, possibly tracing its origins back to Roman times, but that has not been recorded.

"Then there is 'Flower of Kent', which grew in Sir Isaac Newton's garden and so you could say led to the discovery of gravity…"

The one thing Jim hasn't done in all these years is develop any new cultivars of his own. "I never seem to have the time," he says. "That might be something for my retirement."

- Jim Arbury will be at the Wisley Taste of Autumn Festival, 17-21 October. He'll also be at the Wisley Fruit Identification Days on 2-3 November, and on various dates at other RHS gardens. Visit www.rhs.org.uk for full details.

NEXT MONTH Peter Beales, founder of the award-winning Peter Beales Roses.

Royal Horticultural Society

A carnival of colour includes late-flowering plants along with those offering long-season interest, such as monarda and sedum seedheads.

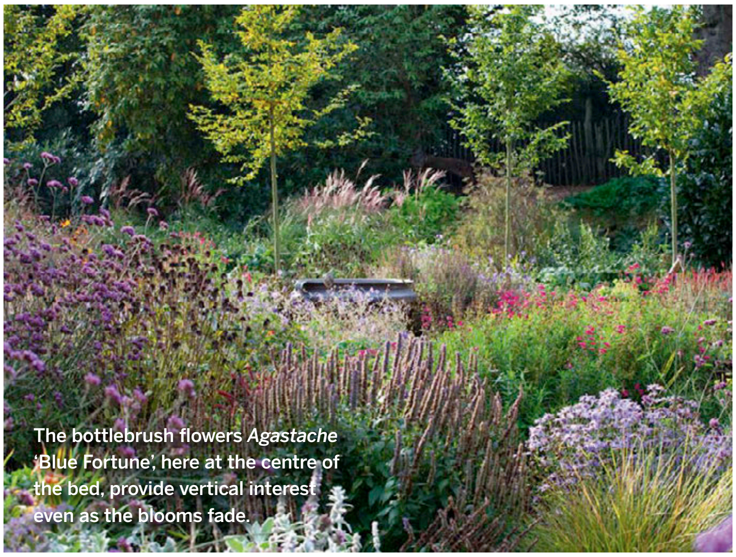
In brief

WHAT **Private garden designed for 'entertaining and enjoyment'.**
WHERE **Near Reigate, Surrey.**
SIZE **Just over 2 acres.**
CLIMATE **Susceptible to high winds.**
SOIL **Flinty clay on top of chalk.**
POINTS OF INTEREST **Relaxed, contemporary planting within an existing Arts & Crafts layout.**

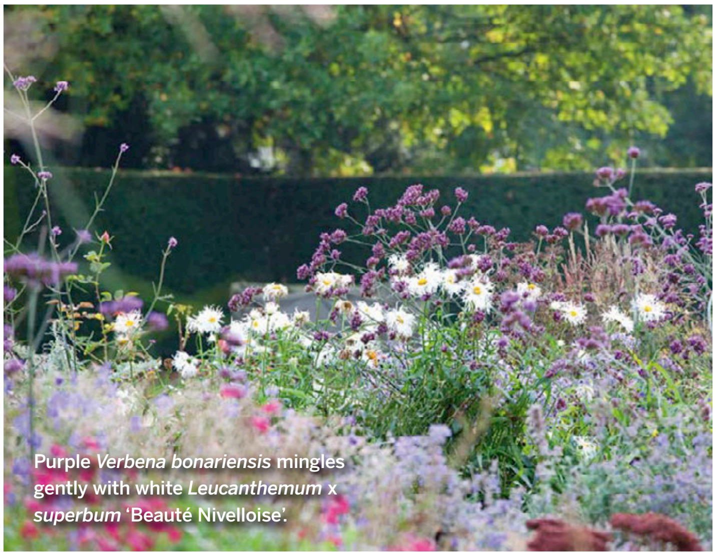
To the bidder *the spoils*

When Pam and John Kay won an auction for the services of designer Nic Howard, they got more than they dreamt possible

WORDS **JODIE JONES** PHOTOGRAPHS **LEIGH CLAPP**

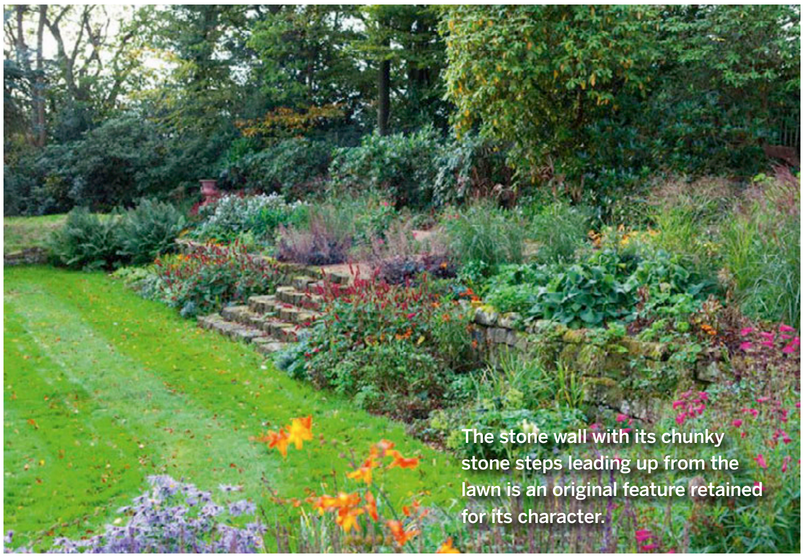


The bottlebrush flowers *Agastache* 'Blue Fortune', here at the centre of the bed, provide vertical interest even as the blooms fade.



Purple *Verbena bonariensis* mingles gently with white *Leucanthemum* x *superbum* 'Beauté Nivelloise'.

Lavender-coloured *Aster* x *frikartii* 'Mönch' brightens swathes of grasses, with *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Fat Domino' dominating the foreground.



The stone wall with its chunky stone steps leading up from the lawn is an original feature retained for its character.

Until 2008, the only thing Pam and John Kay had ever won at auction was a giant Toblerone, but when they heard that garden designer Nic Howard was offering his services to raise funds for the NSPCC they were determined to enter the highest bid.

"We only wanted help with one border," recalls Pam. "The rest of the garden was working pretty well but the bed adjoining our newly installed summer house had proved hard to get right." Nic, however, arrived on site and was instantly struck by its possibilities. "I wanted to take what was here and reignite it," he says.

The Kays' Surrey home is a mellow brick villa dating from 1901 and the garden layout reflected an Arts & Crafts aesthetic. Steps led from a narrow terrace of brick and grass to a sunken garden which in turn gave on to the main, formal lawn. However, Nic could see that the terrace was too narrow for the scale of the property, as were many of the flower beds, and a large number of trees and mature shrubs had grown to oppressive proportions.

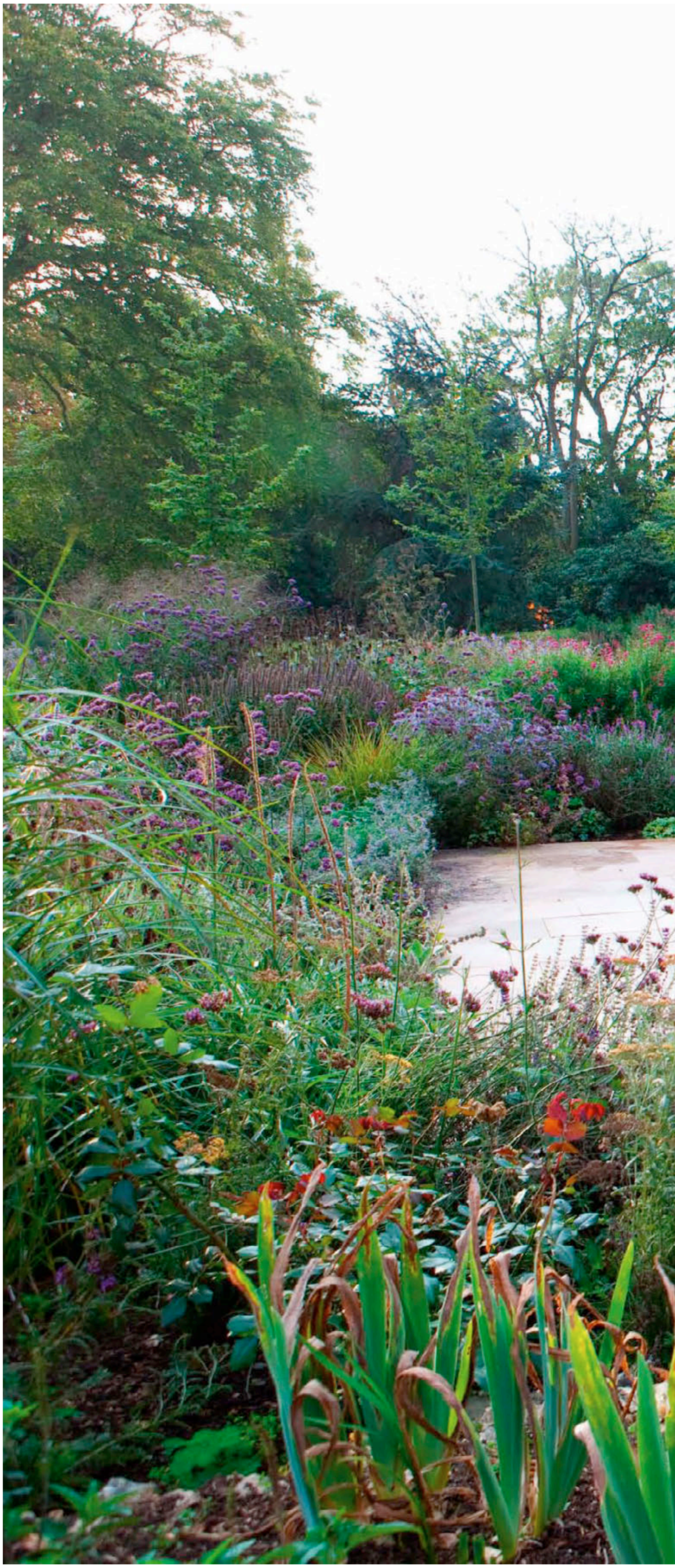
Surprise plans

His plan for the garden took his clients by surprise, and family circumstances forced them to put the work on hold. Yet just three years later, the garden has been transformed into a haze of perennials. Geraniums and *Nepeta*, Lady's mantle *Alchemilla mollis* and *Calamintha* covered in honey bees form a rich palette of colour, accented here and there with clumps of fresh white *Lysimachia* and *Leucanthemum* x *superbum* 'Old Court'.

Grasses are used carefully, in particular *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Malepartus', low mounds of *Anemanthele lessoniana* and flamboyant *Panicum virgatum* which, with its plumes of pinkish flowers, looks fantastic alongside the deep red monardas, which are such a feature of this garden in early autumn.

Drumstick alliums, fennel and verbena are stitched through the scheme to introduce a vertical contrast to the billowing mounds. It seems incredible that the garden was just 12 months old when it was photographed. ▷

"I spend a lot of time talking to the client about how much time they will be able to give the garden. There is no point me putting in difficult plants if no one has the time to look after them"



▷ Nic attributes its rapid establishment to good soil preparation. "Lorryloads of spent mushroom compost got everything off to a flying start. It's nothing to do with overplanting – I generally stick to three plants per square metre."

Tough choices

Clearly, the old adage of choosing the right plants for the place has also helped. "I do love my plants," says Nic. "That is where it all starts. I spend a lot of time talking to the client about their preferred colour schemes, and how much time they will be able to give the garden. There is no point me putting in difficult plants if no one has the time to look after them. But I never, ever draw planting plans first. I like to set myself up with an interesting palette of plants and then just start laying them down, visualising how they will interact."

Pam and John had seen other gardens Nic had created, and were happy to trust his judgement. Which was lucky, because the first step was to cut down a lot of trees. These were mostly unloved and unlovely conifers and sycamores, although the Kays did worry about felling one large oak. "That was a hard decision to take," says Pam. "But now we can see how it has transformed the site, and we've kept the trunk to make into a piece of furniture for the garden."

Year-round beauty

Where possible, existing plants were redeployed. The large stand of mature rhododendrons, which runs down one side of the garden, has been enhanced with an underplanting of hostas, ferns and epimediums moved from elsewhere in the garden.

Where he did create a blank canvas, at the heart of the garden, Nic defined generous planting areas where bold groups could create an inviting display for almost 12 months of the year. "The early months are pretty easy to get right, but it is harder to make a garden sing through August and on into autumn. I rely a lot on foliage. The perennials I use must have good leaf as well as attractive ▷

5 ways to make seating areas work

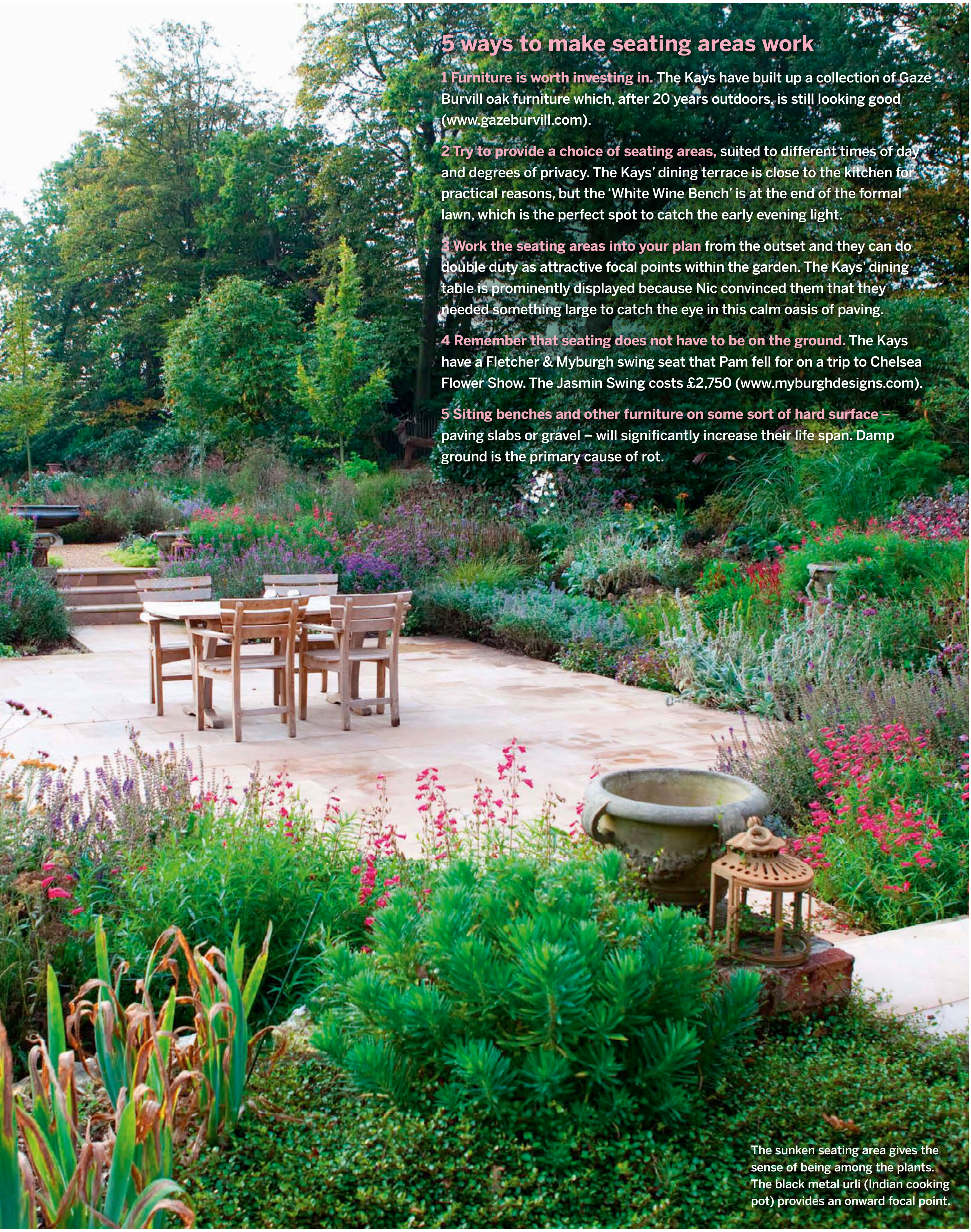
1 Furniture is worth investing in. The Kays have built up a collection of Gaze Burvill oak furniture which, after 20 years outdoors, is still looking good (www.gazeburvill.com).

2 Try to provide a choice of seating areas, suited to different times of day and degrees of privacy. The Kays' dining terrace is close to the kitchen for practical reasons, but the 'White Wine Bench' is at the end of the formal lawn, which is the perfect spot to catch the early evening light.

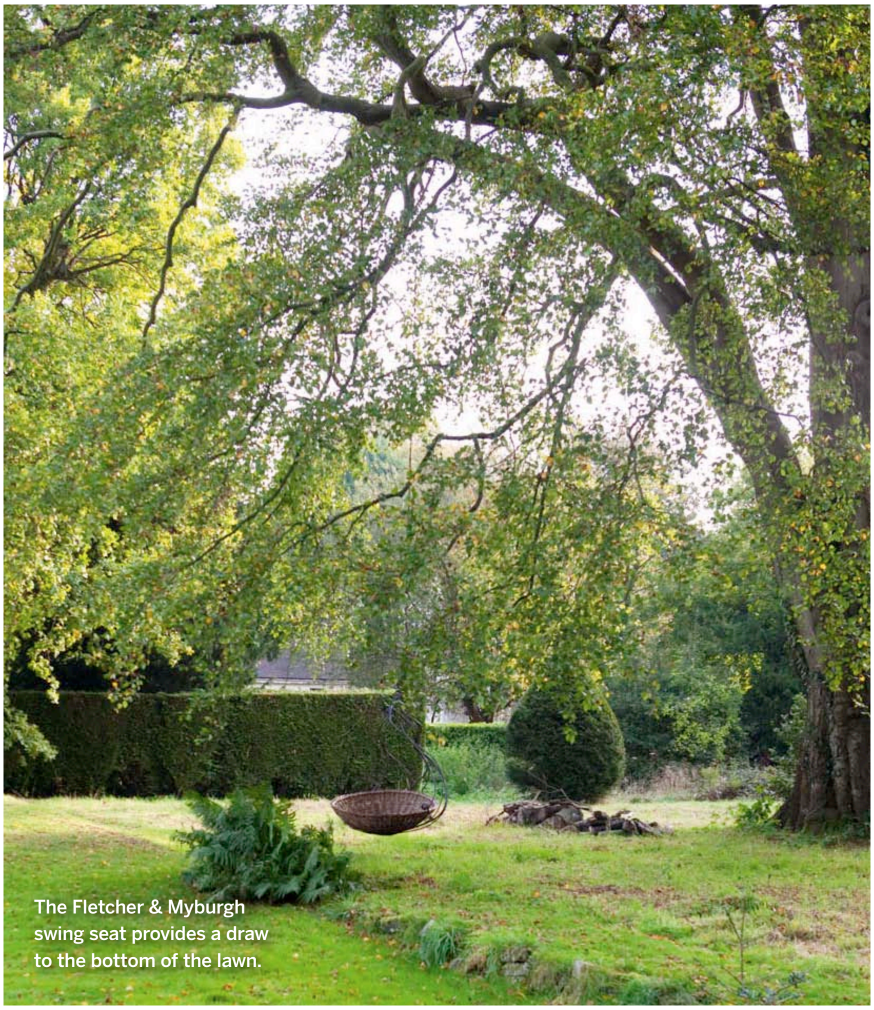
3 Work the seating areas into your plan from the outset and they can do double duty as attractive focal points within the garden. The Kays' dining table is prominently displayed because Nic convinced them that they needed something large to catch the eye in this calm oasis of paving.

4 Remember that seating does not have to be on the ground. The Kays have a Fletcher & Myburgh swing seat that Pam fell for on a trip to Chelsea Flower Show. The Jasmin Swing costs £2,750 (www.myburghdesigns.com).

5 Siting benches and other furniture on some sort of hard surface – paving slabs or gravel – will significantly increase their life span. Damp ground is the primary cause of rot.



The sunken seating area gives the sense of being among the plants. The black metal urli (Indian cooking pot) provides an onward focal point.



The Fletcher & Myburgh swing seat provides a draw to the bottom of the lawn.

▷ flowers. I use a lot of sedums, and heucheras are great, have you ever looked closely at a spent flower head? It is a real thing of beauty. It's surprising how attractive certain plants are in their faded, end of season form. For example, I love *Monarda* 'Fireball', which looks stunning for months. After flowering it often gets blasted by mildew, but this gives it a wonderful silvery appearance which looks amazing alongside *Stachys byzantina*.

"In the past, gardeners were too quick to cut everything back for winter. We leave as much as possible, and the ornamental grasses in particular look sensational till the end of January."

February, the month allotted for a big clear up, is John's least favourite time of year. "It's always a bad moment when they cut everything back. Since we've had the garden done I love my grasses and I can't bear to see them hacked back, even though I know that within a week or two they'll spring back better than ever."

The new intensity of pleasure they get from their garden has surprised and delighted the Kays. "There's a dreaminess about it that keeps rolling on through the year,' says Pam. "Whatever time of day or month of the year you are doing the dusting, a glance out of the window always lifts your heart. It is a perpetual pleasure." □

DESIGNER PROFILE

Nic Howard has built up a successful practice in Surrey, where he combines contemporary design solutions with soft, cottage-style planting tailored to the client's requirements.

TEL 01883 744 020

WEBSITE www.nichoward.com

9 of Nic Howard's favourite late-season plants

1 ***Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Fat Domino'**

An easy-to-please perennial that produces showy spikes of red flowers from summer until well into autumn.

2 ***Alchemilla erythropoda***

Better behaved than the ubiquitous *A. mollis*, this has blue-green foliage and small clusters of flowers that turn russet with age.

3 ***Penstemon 'Andenken an Friedrich Hahn'***

Fantastic wine-red variety, possibly the best of the penstemons. May be sold as *P.* 'Garnet'.

4 ***Verbena bonariensis***

The airy perennial just keeps on flowering from June to September, but may need a little winter protection in exposed sites.

5 ***Erysimum* 'Bowles' Mauve'**

This perennial wallflower will flower almost all year round with little or no attention, but may succumb in a hard winter.

6 ***Aster* x *frikartii* 'Mönch'**

One of the earliest asters to flower, usually in July, it then goes on throwing out lovely lavender blue flowers until October.

7 ***Leucanthemum* x *superbum* 'Beauté Nivelloise'**

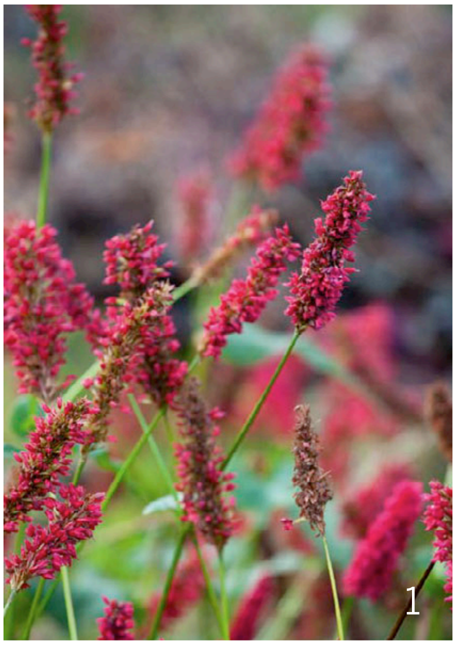
The eccentrically shredded petals of this lovely shasta daisy make a real statement, and the flowers are produced from June to October.

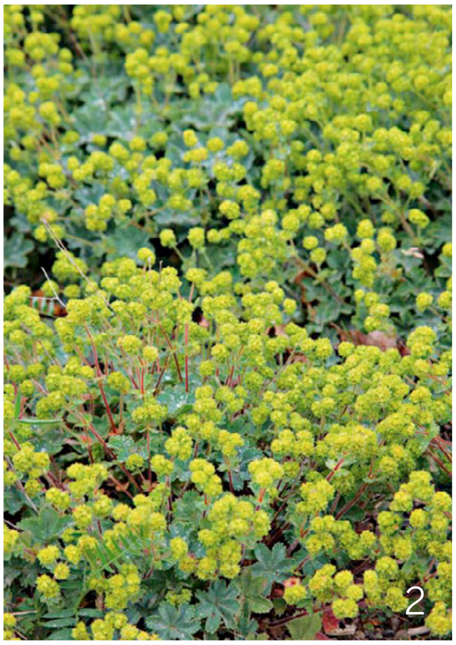
8 ***Salvia nemorosa* 'Caradonna'**

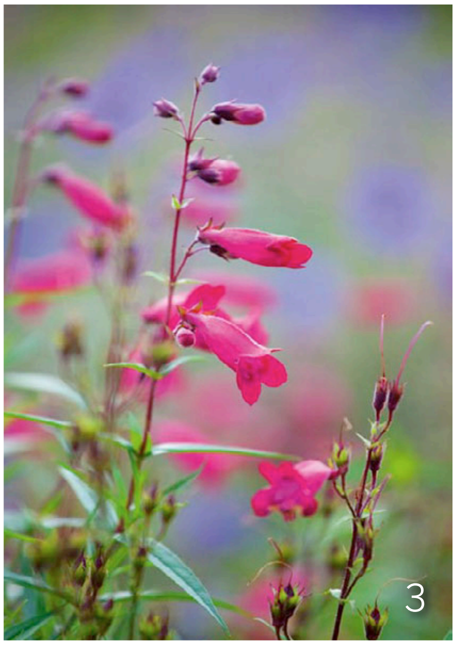
With its deep purple flower spikes on black stems, 'Caradonna' has been the salvia of choice for a few years now, and combines brilliantly with silver foliage.

9 ***Anemanthele lessoniana***

An excellent evergreen grass that will thrive in both sun and shade, and becomes suffused with rich coppery tints in autumn.



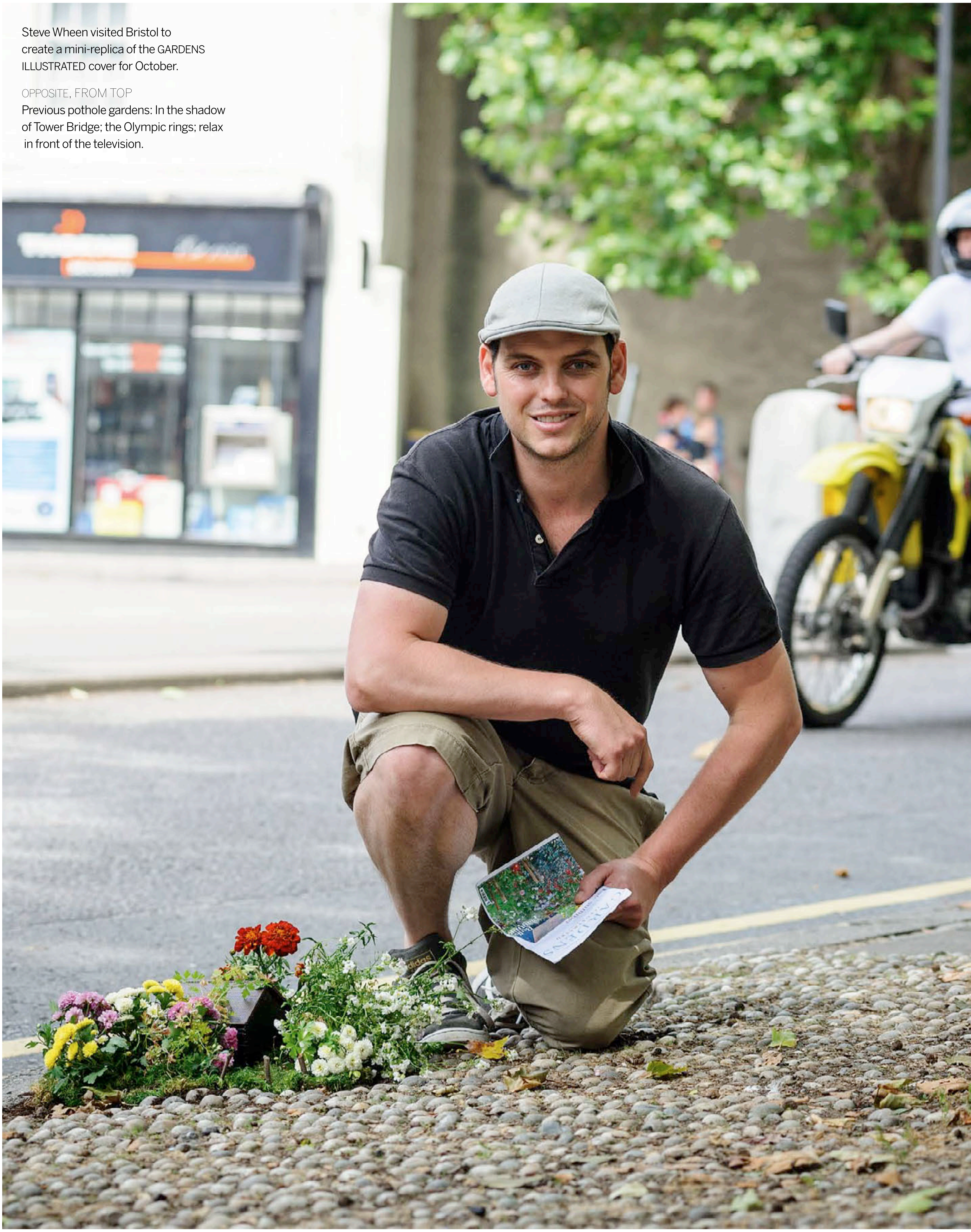


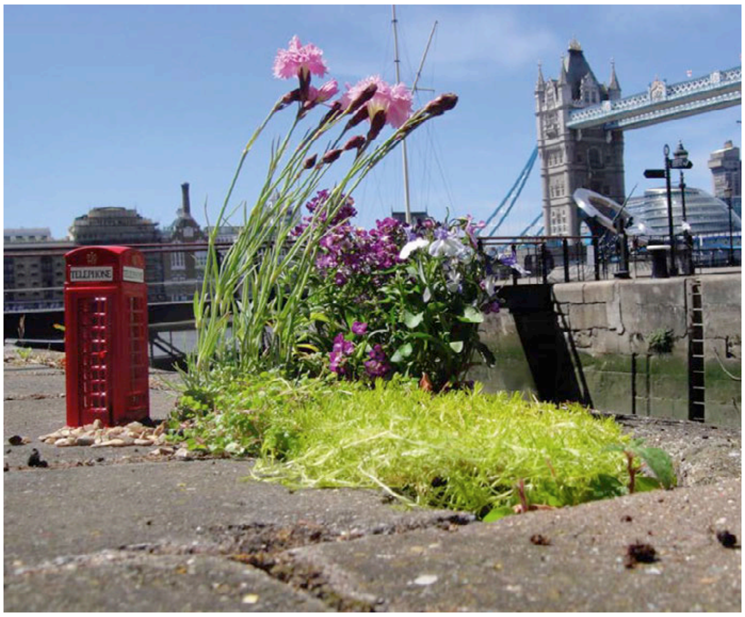


2 MARTIN HUGHES-JONES / GAP PHOTOS. 5 ANDREA JONES IMAGES / ALAMY

Steve Wheen visited Bristol to create a mini-replica of the GARDENS ILLUSTRATED cover for October.

OPPOSITE, FROM TOP
Previous pothole gardens: In the shadow of Tower Bridge; the Olympic rings; relax in front of the television.





The pothole gardener

Bringing guerilla gardening to our city streets – this time in miniature

WORDS ANNIE GATTI PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM

Every couple of weeks my sessions on the computer are interrupted by the arrival of a new post from the Pothole Gardener in my Inbox. I can't resist immediately opening these emails to see what quirky miniature gardens sprouting from a hole or crack in the pavement their creator, Steve Wheen, has magicked this time.

Steve, a 34-year-old Australian who lives in East London, is a marketing creative by day. At the weekends, and sometimes early in the morning on his way to work, he creates his gardens. The first of these 'Holes of Happiness', as Steve calls them on his 2012 video (which has had almost 100,000 hits on YouTube), was made and recorded on his blog in early 2010. At the time Steve was looking for a project about happiness as part of his Masters in Design. As a cyclist he was fed up with dodging potholes and frustrated at the lack of plants and greenery in his part of the city – he grew up in Canberra where green space is the norm. "I suddenly had the idea of taking something that's pretty crappy and creating these unexpected moments of happiness."

Project happiness

He went to Columbia Road Flower Market, bought a pot of white double primulas and a dianthus and planted them at seven in the morning in a back street near his home. "I stood on the other side of the road and then a guy who had just come out his house stopped and looked at it. He started smiling and photographed it on his iPhone and I thought, wow, that little garden looks quite cool and it made him smile. I wonder where I can take these gardens and what I can do with them?"

What came next was the addition of props to make complete scenes but without figures: Steve wants to leave it to the imagination of passersby to people them. The first scene – a chair with a book on the ground beside it, in front of miniature daffs, one snowdrop and a cyclamen – was in Highgate and is one of the few that has survived for more than a few weeks. Some have been flattened by cars within minutes; quite often they get peed on by dogs. But their ephemerality is an essential part of what Steve is creating. ▷

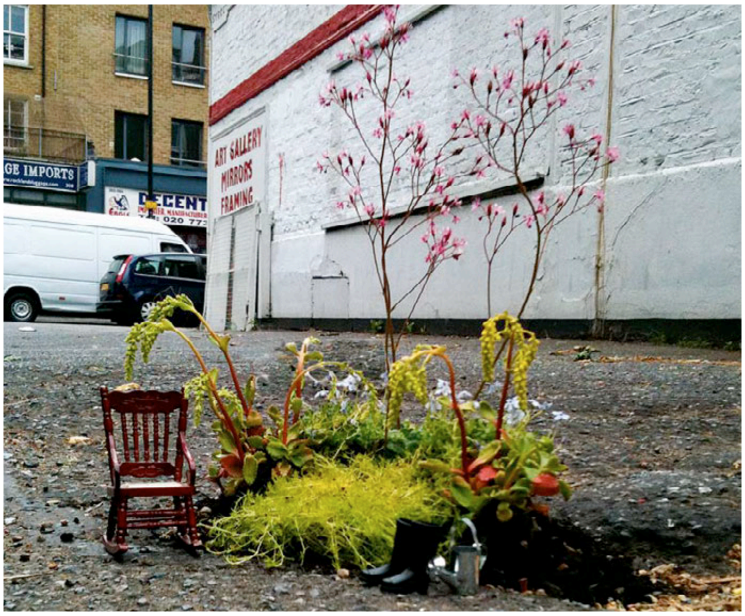
"He called in and said something like 'Any police in the area, come and check this out, it's amazing' And then told me if more people did this then the world would be a better place"

▷ If they were there all the time, there wouldn't be that element of surprise. "What I like about them is that they really slow people down."

He also enjoys just standing back and watching people's reactions. One of his favourites is the Music Garden. It has an upright piano with a lamp providing light for the imaginary pianist against a background of fiery red salvias. He made it in Milan during Design Week where he had time to see passersby lying flat on the pavement photographing it and one girl even pretending to play the piano.

At first Steve used to earmark particular potholes and then buy the plants. Now he devises the scene and chooses the props first. One of the largest he's made, in front of the MOD building across the river from the London Eye, was also his only brush with the law. Having got permission from a security guard, he planted his mini Eye, with pots of daffs for the pods, when a gruff policeman approached and asked him what he thought he was doing. "I told him," explains Steve, "and he stood back and watched. Then he came over and said, 'Wow, you really are' and then he picked up his handset, called in and said something like 'Any police in the area, come and check this out, it's amazing'. And then told me if more people did this then the world would be a better place."

For anyone wanting to have a go, he advises choosing a safe place and using low, really colourful plants that will stand out against the tarmac or pavement. Having pothole gardened in Bristol, Bangalore and New York, he himself wants to continue going global: "I would love to make them in different cities around the world to see all the different reactions." □



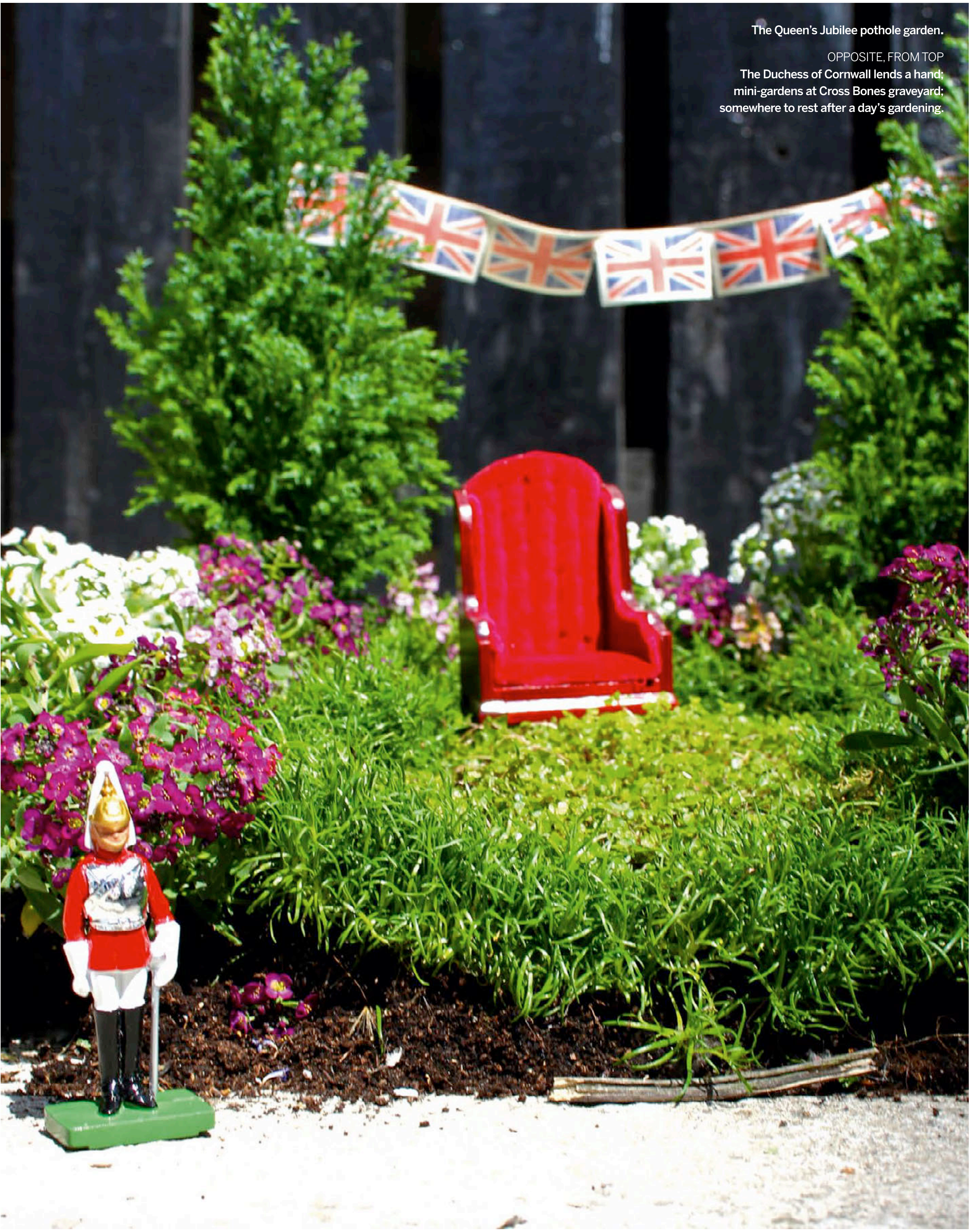
USEFUL INFORMATION

You can see a video of Steve creating his GARDENS ILLUSTRATED garden at our website www.gardensillustrated.com.

Sign up to Steve's blog to keep up to date with his latest creations.

WEBSITE www.thepotholegardener.com

The Little Book of Little Gardens by Steve Wheen (Dokument Press, £10.99) is published on 15 October.



The Queen's Jubilee pothole garden.

OPPOSITE, FROM TOP
The Duchess of Cornwall lends a hand; mini-gardens at Cross Bones graveyard; somewhere to rest after a day's gardening.

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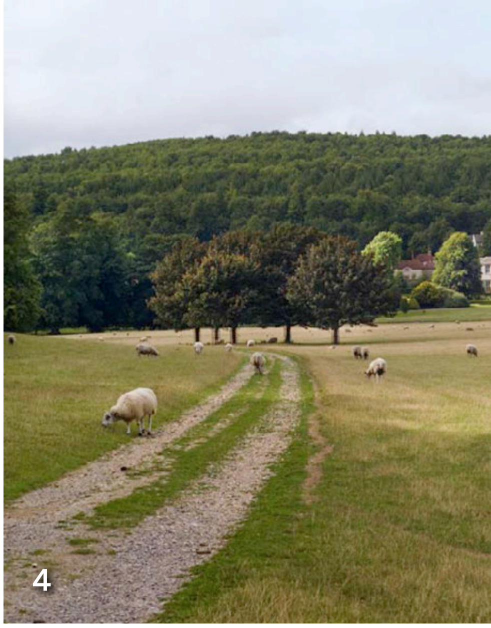
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1 Dahlias are always a good source of colour and brightness.

2 A herbal parterre adds practical value to the garden.

3 Sarah Wain and Jim Buckland, the couple who manage the miraculous West Dean gardens.

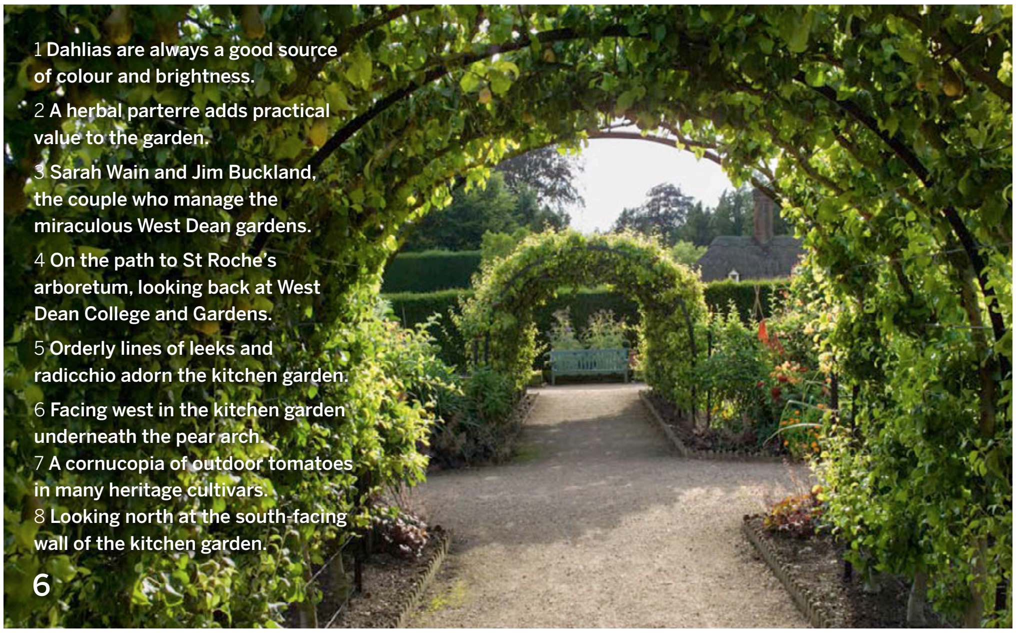
4 On the path to St Roche's arboretum, looking back at West Dean College and Gardens.

5 Orderly lines of leeks and radicchio adorn the kitchen garden.

6 Facing west in the kitchen garden underneath the pear arch.

7 A cornucopia of outdoor tomatoes in many heritage cultivars.

8 Looking north at the south-facing wall of the kitchen garden.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West Dean's *wonderwall*

Inspired and inspiring, the enormous walled kitchen garden that graces West Dean combines educational excellence with superb spectacle

WORDS **LIA LENDEERTZ** PHOTOGRAPHS **ANDREA JONES**

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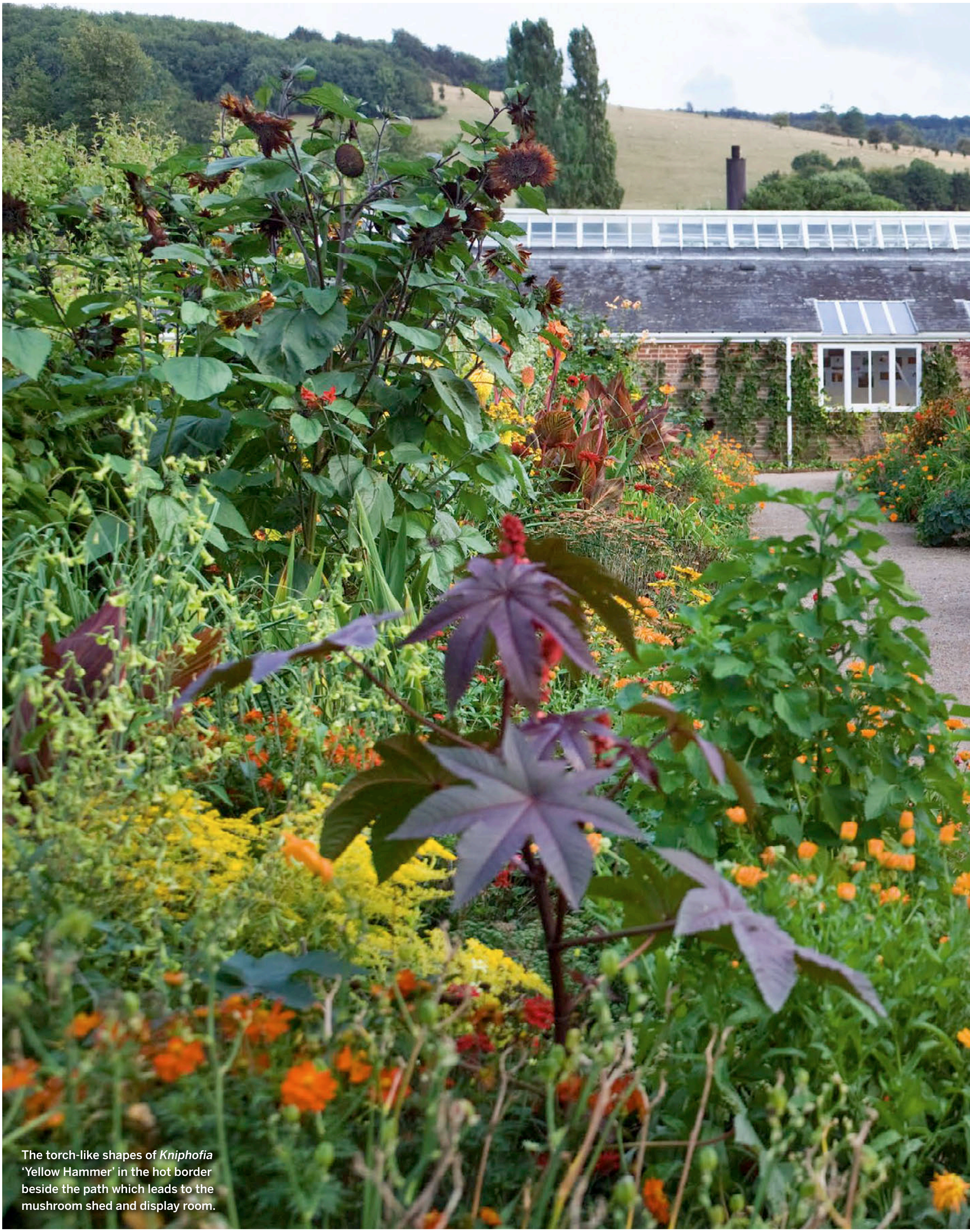


The torch-like shapes of *Kniphofia* 'Yellow Hammer' in the hot border beside the path which leads to the mushroom shed and display room.

In brief

NAME **West Dean College.**

WHAT **One of the largest flint-faced houses in the country, West Dean College is surrounded by a large estate containing a Grade 2 listed walled garden.**

WHERE **The Lavant Valley, in West Sussex.**

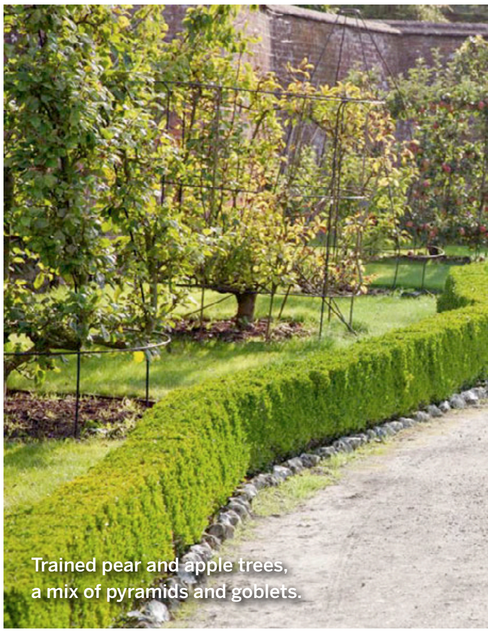
SIZE **A 2.5-acre walled garden within a 6,400-acre estate.**

CLIMATE **The garden is on a gentle south slope so is fairly warm and sheltered, but is situated at the foot of the South Downs so there is high rainfall.**

SOIL **Light loam.**

POINTS OF INTEREST **A formerly derelict walled garden, redeveloped to a high standard with trained fruit trees, vegetable beds and restored Foster & Pearson glasshouses.**

This apple store is built into the fruit garden wall.



Trained pear and apple trees, a mix of pyramids and goblets.

Entering the walled garden at West Dean is a hugely satisfying experience. Perfectly restored original Foster and Pearson greenhouses, pit houses and cold frames gleam pristine white and glinting glass in the sunlight, bursting with 250 cultivars of ripening chillies, 150 of tomatoes, plus peaches, grapes and rows of ruffled salad leaves. Every foot of red-brick wall is packed with lovingly trained fruit, and the beds are busy with neat rows of crops. The central flower border is known as the 'Hot Border', and in midsummer, in its full pomp of scarlet crocosmia, orange dahlia and yellow kniphofia, it's clear why. Altogether it is the ultimate walled garden.

Sarah Wain and Jim Buckland, the gardening couple at the heart of this garden, are pioneers of the past decade's revival in walled garden restoration. They were among the first to spot the potential of these beautiful spaces.

Television inspiration

It was the television programme *The Victorian Kitchen Garden* that ultimately led to West Dean. The programme followed gardener Harry Dodson as he restored and replanted the walled garden at Chilton Foliat in Wiltshire. "So many people involved in restoring walled gardens cite *The Victorian Kitchen Garden* as an inspiration," says Jim, "It was hugely influential." They arrived in 1991 to a garden that had been turned into a garden centre, complete with 1960s greenhouses rubbing up alongside the original, crumbling Victorian ones, the rest of the garden rented to a strawberry grower. But their arrival coincided with money becoming available for redevelopment. "We needed to put the garden on the map," says Jim, "and at that point nobody was redeveloping kitchen gardens back to their 19th century origins."

It might seem surprising, given the need to take the walled garden back in time, that it has such a fresh, lively feel. But while Jim and Sarah started off growing heritage cultivars and the plants that would have been originally grown in the garden, they soon veered away from this path. "We don't call it a restoration, but a redevelopment," says Jim.

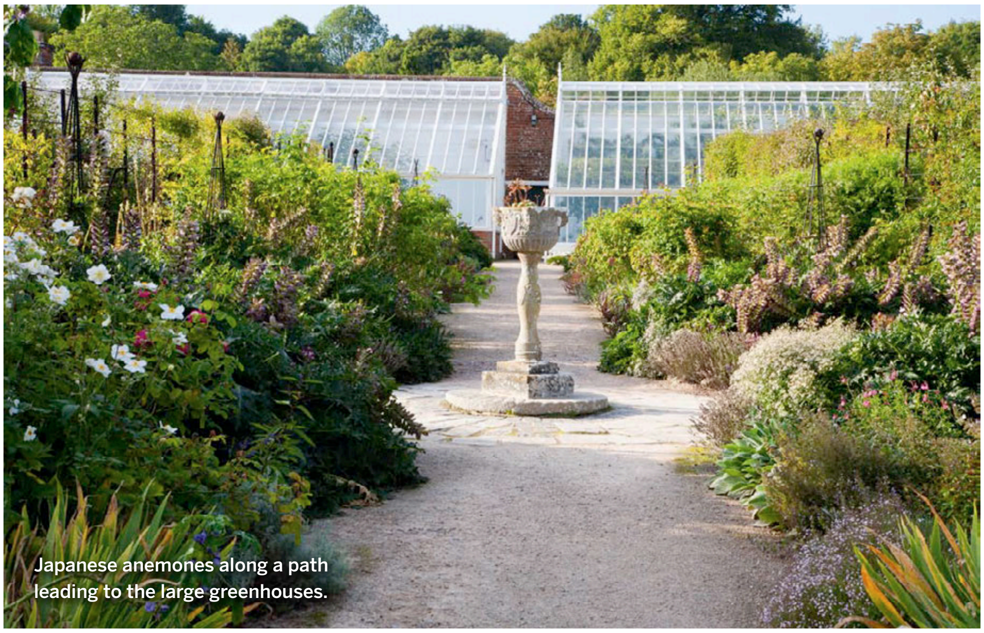
The walled garden sits at the centre of a much larger garden and is a part of West Dean College, and Sarah feels strongly that it should have an instrinsic educational value. While Jim takes care of the bigger picture, Sarah is the grower. Hating gardens filled with signage, instead she grows heritage cultivars up against modern ones and lets the results speak for themselves. "It's visual, it's obvious. For me the romance of growing heritage cultivars is tempered by their productivity, but I like to allow people to make up their own minds," she says. Sarah thinks many old cultivars are well worth growing – she names leek 'Musselburgh', broad bean 'Aqua Dulce' as among her favourites – but thinks gardeners need to make wise selections: "I'm always thinking of beginners. If you've just started and you grow an old cultivar of squash susceptible to powdery mildew, you'd think it was your fault and be disheartened."

The great thing about all this education is that you don't notice you're getting it. In fact, the main impression is one of lavish levels of care and attention. West Dean employs 10 gardeners and a small army of volunteers to maintain 100 acres of gardens, grounds and arboretum, and it shows. Everywhere you look, there is horticulture being practised at its very highest level, spurred on by Sarah and Jim's fascination with both rediscovered techniques and the very latest breeding, and the desire to pass their learning on. □

VISITING WEST DEAN

ADDRESS West Dean Gardens, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0QZ TEL 01243 818210 WEBSITE www.westdean.org.uk OPENING TIMESWinter 2012/13: closed January 2013. From 1 November to 23 December and from 1 to 28 February, 10.30am-4pm (last entry 3.30pm). Summer 2013: from 1 March to 31 October, 10.30am-5pm (last entry 4.30pm).

TOP ROW OF IMAGES BY ABIGAIL REX / GAP PHOTOS



Japanese anemones along a path leading to the large greenhouses.

4 ways to train fruit trees

One of the most striking features of the walled garden at West Dean is the array of trained fruit, both free-standing and wall-trained. Training fruit slows the flow of sap, so encouraging more tough, fruiting wood and less soft, sappy growth. It is a great way to fit fruit into a small garden. Fruit is trained in a number of different ways at West Dean.

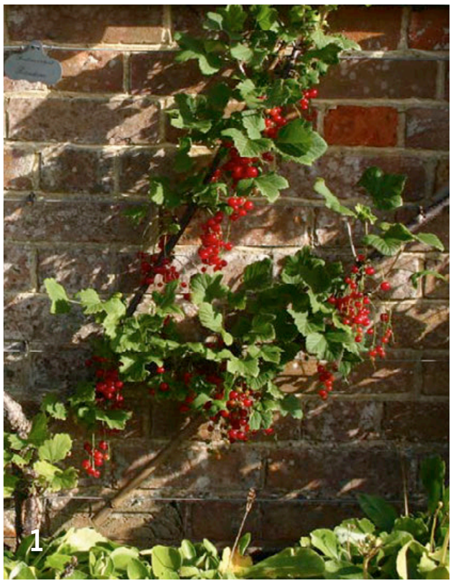
1 **Shade-tolerant fruits including redcurrants, blackcurrants and gooseberries** are trained up north-facing walls. Although all would do better in sun, this makes great use of all the available space.

2 **Pears are trained as oblique cordons against south-facing walls,** so allowing many cultivars to fit into a small space. "But you don't need a wall," says Sarah, "you can do the same on wires and create garden dividers."

3 **The pear arch is made by training single** cordons up and over a metal archway, and makes a beautiful and imposing garden feature, as well as providing a way of fitting lots of fruit into the garden.

4 **The most spectacular examples are the goblet-trained pear and apple trees.** Over seven years single stems are trained up, pinched out to encourage branching, then trained out and up into a goblet shape. This is an old French technique.

1 PETER JONES



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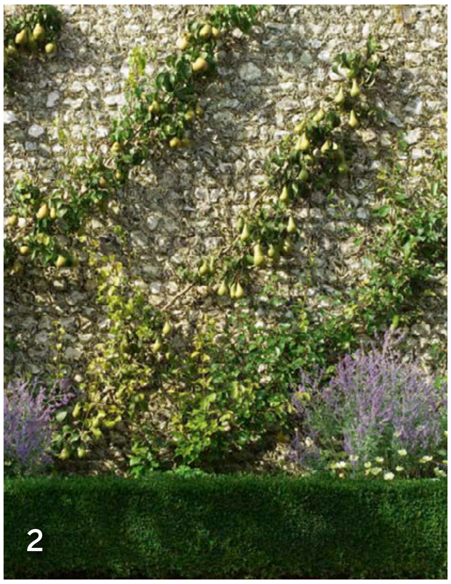

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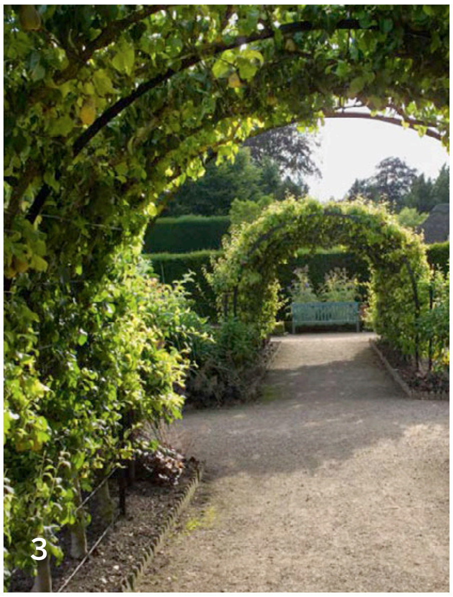

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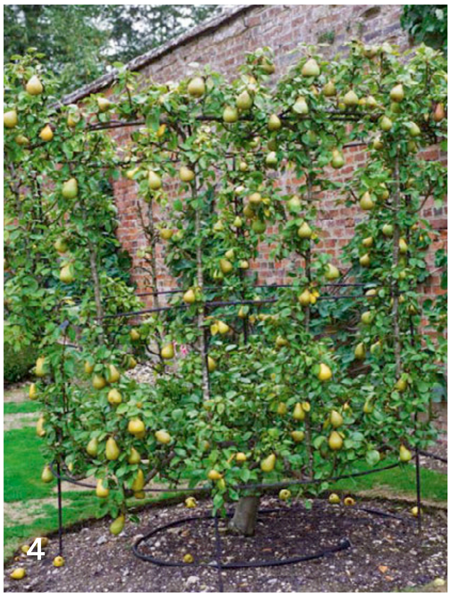

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SPRING INTO LIFE

Now is the time to plan your colour combinations and plant your bulbs if you want beautiful spring displays next year. Gardener and expert plantswoman Helen Dillon shares the secrets of success.

WORDS **HELEN DILLON**

BULB OFFER

Inspired by Helen's feature, Avon bulbs have put together five spring bulb collections and are offering readers a 25 per cent saving. See page 100.

ANDREA JONES / WWW.ARABELLALENNOXBOYD.COM

Natural good looks

Possibly the most beautiful combination of bulbs and other spring flowers I've ever seen, all growing in short turf, was at Gresgarth Hall in Lancashire, home of designer and landscape architect Arabella Lennox-Boyd and her husband Mark. There were fritillaries (*Fritillaria meleagris* and *F. m.* var. *unicolor* subvar. *alba*), white daffodils (*Narcissus* 'Thalia') and blue *Anemone blanda* all mixed with cowslips (*Primula veris*) and pale yellow wild primroses (*Primula vulgaris*). The cowslips came in a packet of seed, and have spread everywhere. The primroses are also seeding with abandon, as are the fritillaries. An important contribution is also made by the wild white *Anemone nemorosa*, which is firmly established in the garden. It's important to know that the turf is only mown once a year, around the middle to end of August.

1 ***PRIMULA VERIS***

Cowslips, once a common native wildflower, are perfect for moist meadow and pasture. Does best in sun or part shade. Propagate by division or seed. 15cm tall. AGM*

2 ***PRIMULA VULGARIS***

Utterly charming, the native primrose heralds spring with its cheerful pale yellow flowers. Prefers sun or part shade, ideally on a grassy bank or light woodland. Propagate by division or sow from seed. 10cm. AGM

3 ***FRITILLARIA MELEAGRIS***

Snake's head fritillary is another charming British native species. Its pretty bell-like flowers are chequered pinkish-lilac and reddish purple. Easy to grow and good for naturalising, choose a site where the soil isn't prone to drying out and, importantly, remains moist in summer. 30cm.

FRITILLARIA MELEAGRIS* VAR. *UNICOLOR* SUBVAR. *ALBA

The white snake's head fritillary has pendent white flowers on slender stems with narrow grey-green leaves. Grow in same conditions as above. Looks particularly lovely in a damp wildflower garden. 30cm. AGM

4 ***NARCISSUS* 'THALIA'**

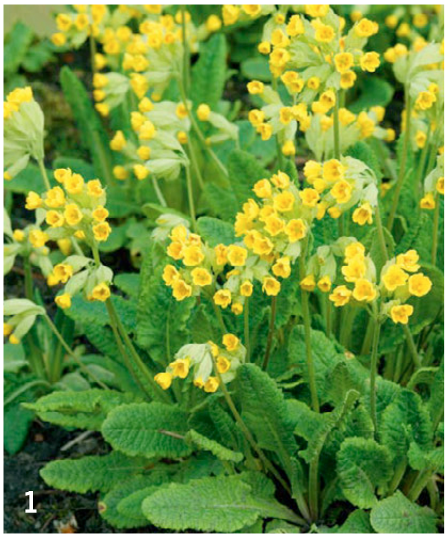
This multi-flowered daffodil, which dates back to 1916, has a delicate scent and it works particularly well as a cut flower. 35cm.

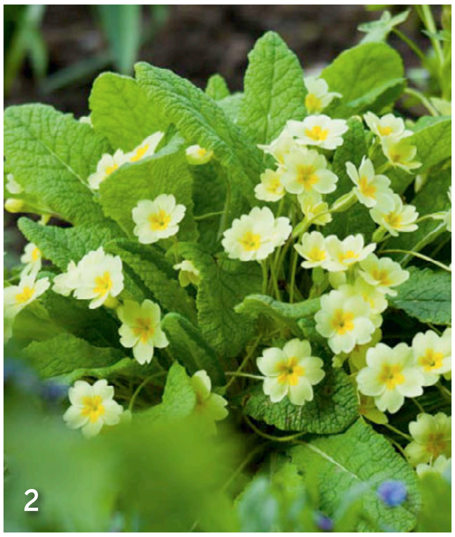
5 ***ANEMONE BLANDA***

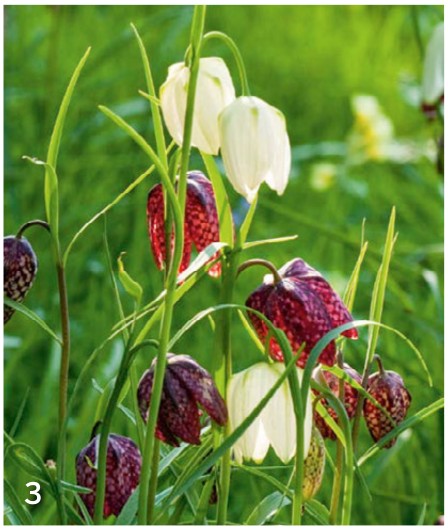
These daisy-like flowers come in stunning shades of blue and purple. Does best in moist, well-drained, humus-rich soil. Doesn't mind being dry when dormant so is good for positions shaded in summer, such as under deciduous trees. 10cm. AGM

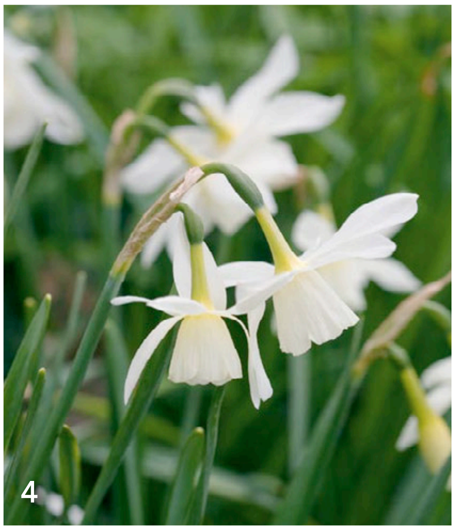
6 ***ANEMONE NEMOROSA***

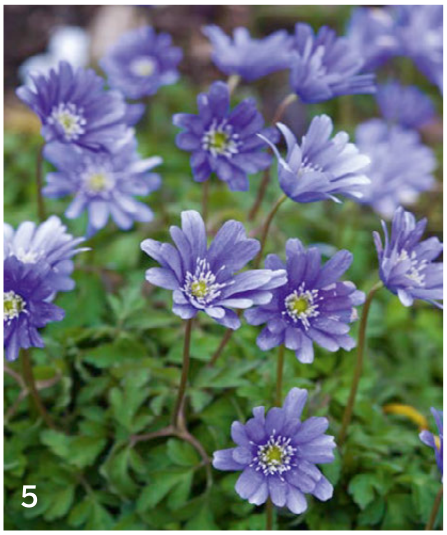
The wood anemone is a star of spring plantings. It will happily naturalise in deciduous woodlands or a shady spot in humus-rich soil. All *Anemone nemorosa* cultivars are best divided immediately after flowering – they establish much better when in full growth. 10cm.

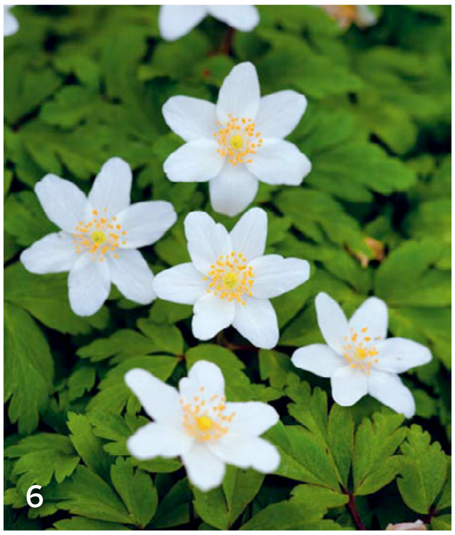












1 SHAPENCOLOUR / ALAMY, 2 JONATHAN BUCKLEY, 3 CHRISTA BRAND, 4 SHARON PEARSON, 5 HEATHER EDWARDS, 6 ALL GAP PHOTOS

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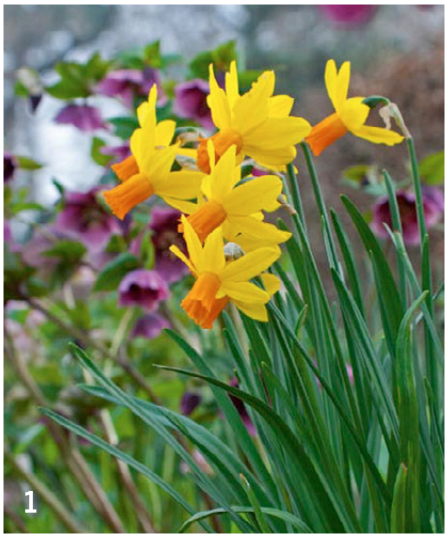
*AGM – HOLDS AN AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT FROM THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Purple and orange

Orange is a wonderfully exciting colour. An artist once told me that it was a much easier colour to deal with than yellow. Some say 'thrilling' and others say 'clash' but I just adore orange mixed with purple and – dare one say – pink. Last April I went to Suffolk to stay with Rod and Jane Leeds, whose garden is full of excellent plants (as one would expect from a past president of the Alpine Garden Society). It was here that I first saw how enchanting bulbs can look when planted in carefully thought-out groups, rather than spread around the garden in twos and threes, like too few cherries on a cake. It was Rod who kindly suggested the following combinations so I'd like to give him a special thank you. Alan Street of Avon Bulbs was also a great help, as was Christine Skelmersdale of Broadleigh Gardens.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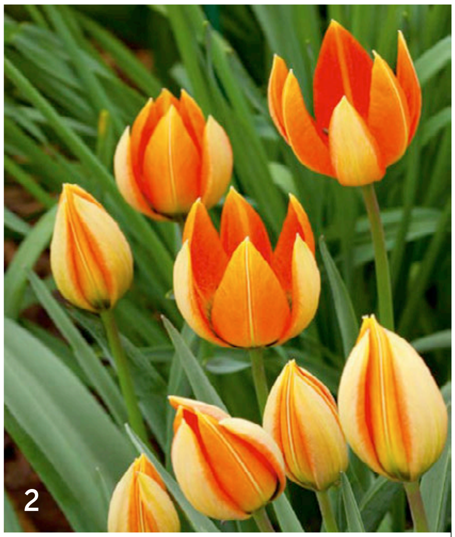
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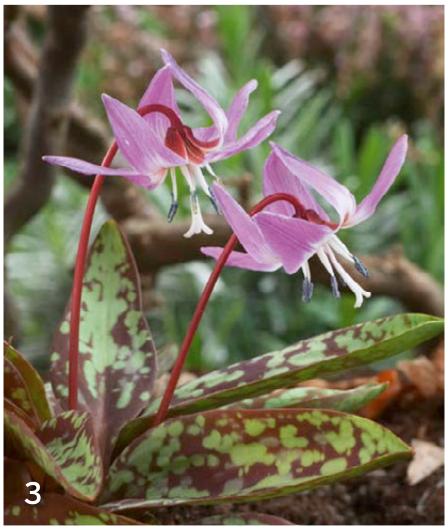
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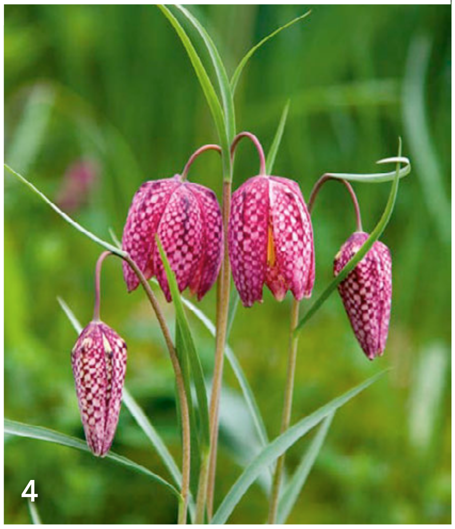
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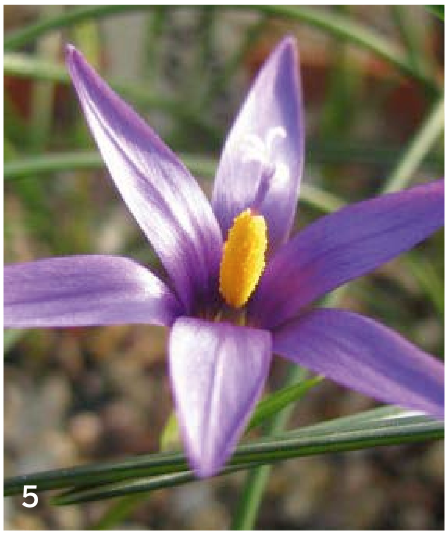
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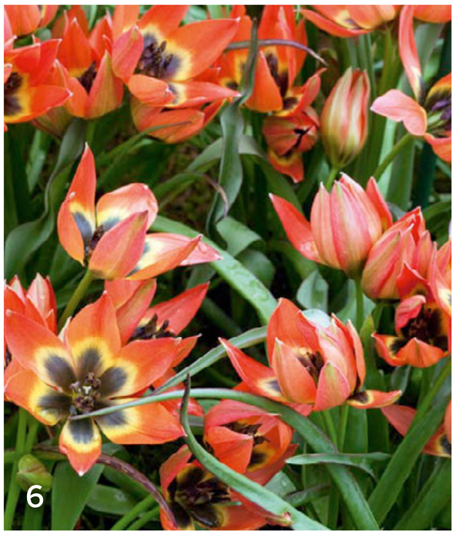
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1 ***NARCISSUS* 'JETFIRE'**

This pretty, small daffodil has a neat orange cup and golden-yellow, swept-back petals. Does best in well-drained, moist soil in full sun or part shade. Good for naturalising. 20cm.

2 ***TULIPA ORPHANIDEA* WHITTALLII GROUP**

An unusual and very beautiful species tulip with burnt orange flowers stained bronze in the centre. Reliable and easy to grow, it likes a sunny spot in well-drained soil. 30cm. AGM

3 ***ERYTHRONIUM DENS-CANIS* 'PURPLE KING'**

This dog's tooth violet has dramatic pink-purple flowers with reflexed petals and large leaves attractively mottled with chocolate brown. Good for dappled shade in moist, well-drained soil. Very easy. 15cm.

4 ***FRITILLARIA MELEAGRIS***

The name *meleagris* means 'spotted like a guinea fowl', and with the petals' distinctive colouring you can see why. The flowers are generally bell-shaped and pendant. The leaves are usually linear or lance-shaped. See page 49 for a full description.

5 ***ROMULEA TEMPSKYANA***

A beautiful small bulb (in this case the bulb itself is also very small), which insists on free-draining conditions, such as a raised bed or trough and pot culture in cold gardens. The purple flowers on short stems have yellow throats and anthers.

6 ***TULIPA* 'LITTLE PRINCESS'**

A very good small tulip in an extraordinary mix of bright colours. Held in clusters, the flowers are coppery orange with a black centre outlined in deep yellow. Does best in a sunny situation in very well-drained soil. 12cm. AGM

Pale pink and yellow

'The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come.' (A quotation from *Song of Solomon*). Spring is the time for the little flowers, wood anemones and tiny yellow daffodils and other sweet, small heralds of spring. To me, the whole joy of early bulbs is to be able to look at them close to, to see just how beautiful they are. Ideally, for your spring planting you need separate places, such as under deciduous trees or shrubs, in well-drained raised beds, in woodland areas, or in containers. Recently I've been making extra paths at the back of the summer border to give access to plantings of small bulbs at the back of the herbaceous plant area. Then, when they are dying off in May, other plants come up to hide the mess.

1 ***ANEMONE RANUNCULOIDES***
This beautiful wood anemone has bright yellow flowers with deep green foliage. Will form a lovely carpet in a shady spot that is not too dry. Good for naturalising. Best divided after flowering when still in growth. 10cm.

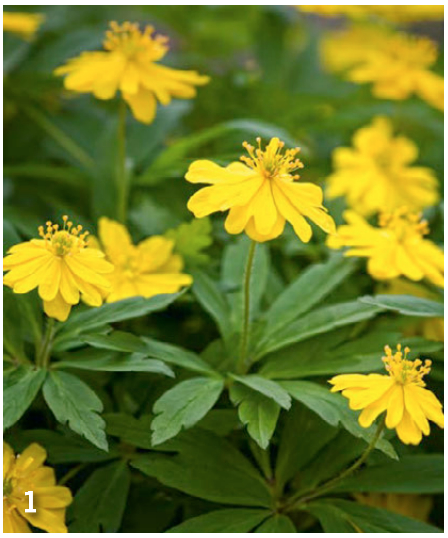
2 ***NARCISSUS* 'ELKA'**
An excellent, early flowering, tiny daffodil with milk white petals and a long lemon trumpet, which matures to pure white. Named by Cornish cut-flower grower Alec Gray after two lady daffodil growers Elizabeth and Kate. Can be divided if necessary after flowering. 15cm. AGM

3 ***CORYDALIS SOLIDA* 'BETH EVANS'**
Particularly lovely with pale pink tubular flowers and ferny leaves. Likes woodland conditions and a cool moist soil. Dies back quickly and tidily. 10-15cm.

4 ***ERYTHRONIUM REVOLUTUM***
One of the very best dog tooth violets, it has deep rose-pink flowers and beautifully mottled leaves. Likes light shade and moistish conditions so use plenty of leaf mould. If happy will seed about. Buy from a reputable bulb nursery to ensure corms have not dried out. 30cm. AGM

5 ***SCILLA BIFOLIA* 'ROSEA'**
A sweet little pale-pink flowered form of *Scilla bifolia*. Tolerant of a range of conditions, even shade. It is long-lived, very easy and gently seeds itself around. 10cm.

6 ***CHIONODOXA* 'PINK GIANT'**
Pretty, pale-pink star-like flowers, sometimes called 'confetti flowers' because they can be grown as if scattered through grass. They are best planted in full spring light. Long-lived and easy. 13cm.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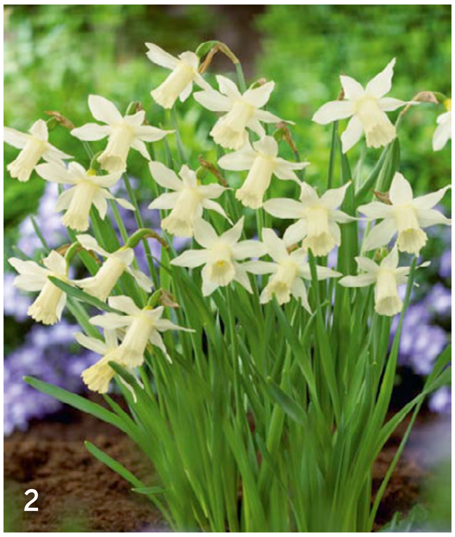
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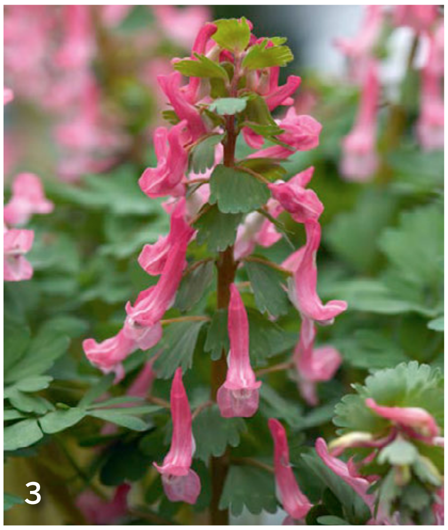
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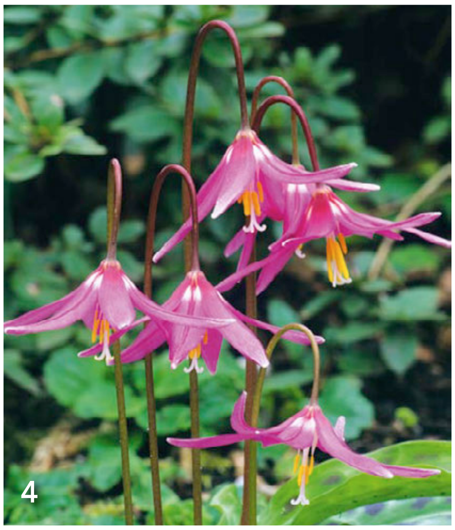
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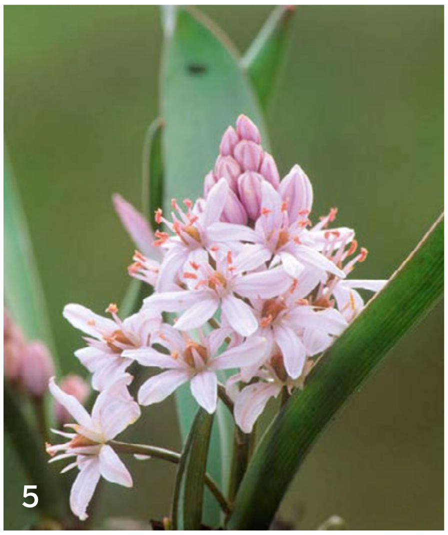
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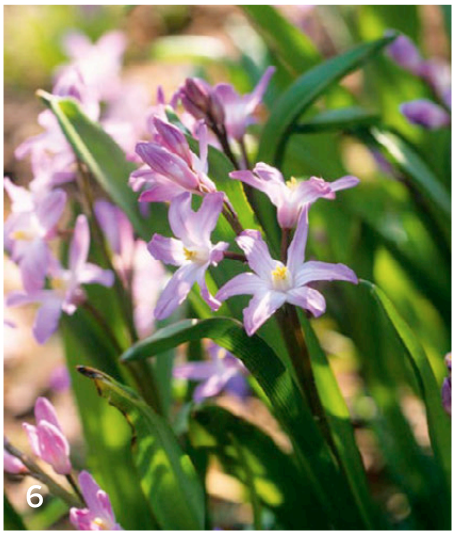
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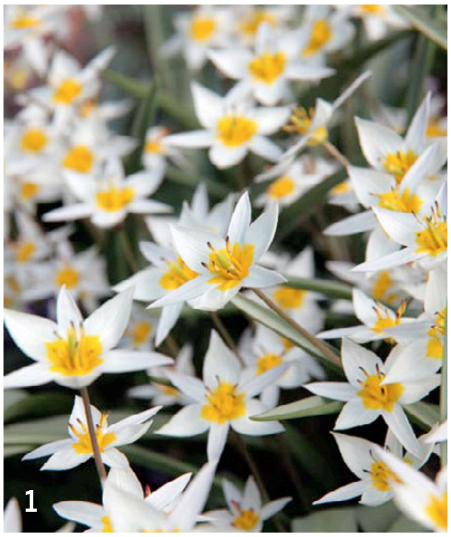
1 CHRISTINA BOLLEN / GAP PHOTOS, 2 VISIONS / GAP PHOTOS, 3 TORIE CHUGG / GARDENN COLLECTION, 4 S&O / GAP PHOTOS, 5 MARCUS HARPUR / GAP PHOTOS, 6 MARIANNE MAJERUS

White and green

How could one ever tire of the most charming of all combinations, the pristine greens and whites of spring? The *Anemonella* in this list is very special, I would hate to tread on it by mistake – mark well with small stakes or a bit of wire netting as it disappears in summer. Your attitude to the other small bulbs can be more cavalier except as their tender snouts emerge in spring when they are most vulnerable to being trampled on. As a general rule, bulbs like well-drained soil. If you suspect you've got heavy soil, work in some bags of grit. Sometimes grit can be full of gunge when you open the bag, and the only thing to do is wash it several times, until the water runs clean, then leave it to dry. Well-rotted beech or oak leaf mould is acceptable to most bulbs.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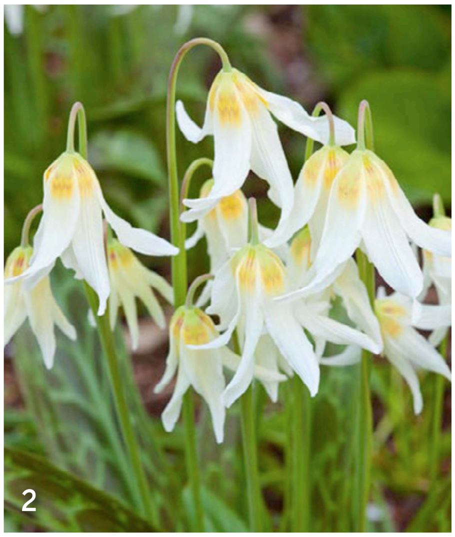
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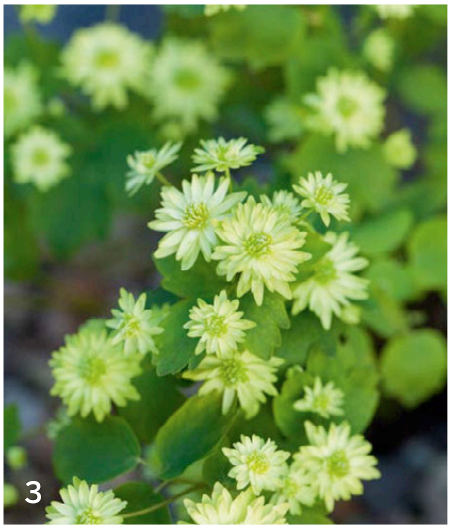
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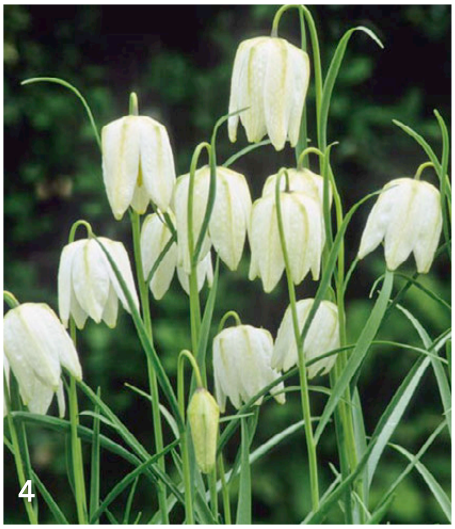
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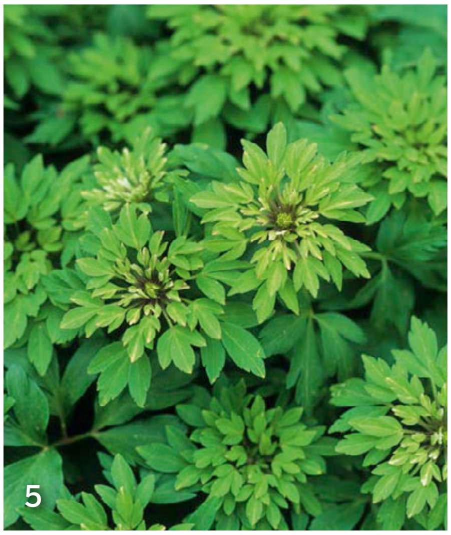
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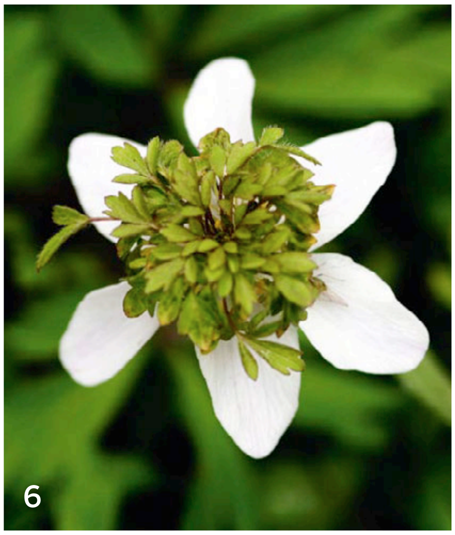
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1 MARTIN HUGHES-JONES / GAP PHOTOS, 2 MARK BOLTON / GAP PHOTOS, 3 MARIANNE MAJERUS, 4 JONATHAN BUCKLEY / THE GARDEN COLLECTION, 5 HOWARD RICE / GAP PHOTOS.

1 ***TULIPA TURKESTANICA***
Small, early species tulip. Flowers have a green tinge and orange-yellow centres. Lots of flowers per bulb. Easy and reliable. 20cm.

2 ***ERYTHRONIUM CALIFORNICUM* 'WHITE BEAUTY'**
Large creamy white flowers above mottled leaves. Likes leaf mould and summer shade. Easy and long-lived. According to bulb expert Christine Skelmersdale of Broadleigh Gardens it is 'Still the best!'. 20cm. AGM

3 ***ANEMONELLA THALICTROIDES* 'BETTY BLAKE'**
This beautiful little woodland plant from North America has perfect, double, pale green flowers. Does best in light, rich moisture-retentive soil but is vulnerable to slugs and overly wet conditions. 8cm. AGM

4 ***FRITILLARIA MELEAGRIS* VAR. *UNICOLOR* SUBVAR. *ALBA***
A bulbous perennial with grey-green leaves. Solitary or paired, nodding, bell-shaped flowers 3-4cm in length are white and open in spring. See description on page 39.

5 ***ANEMONE NEMOROSA* 'VIRESCENS'**
A fascinating oddity, all green and very frilly. The 'flowers' (actually finely cut bracts) last well. Prefers moist soil in a shady aspect. Divide after flowering if required. 12cm.

6 ***ANEMONE NEMOROSA* 'GREEN FINGERS'**
This rarely offered flower has white petals and an unusual tuffet of bright green leaves in the centre. Moving *Anemone nemorosa* is often a bit fraught, but moved in spring they will go on growing, whereas if you disturb them in autumn they take some time to settle. 20cm.

Blue and white

Blue and white together are wonderful on porcelain, but they are especially pretty when on flowers growing together in the garden. After the first season you might want to divide or change the position of some of the new bulbs. The only time I think about bulbs is when they are in flower, and immediately after flowering is the ideal time to shift them because you can see what you're doing. If you are planting bulbs in early autumn when the soil is still dry, it often helps to 'puddle them in' – make a hole, fill it up with water, drop in the bulb, top up with soil, and make firm before the water runs away. And, for this blue and white planting suggestion, what about buying far more *Scilla siberica* than any of the other bulbs and planting them through everything else? Any excuse for more of that heavenly blue.

1 ***ALLIUM PARADOXUM* VAR. *NORMALE***
Small and exquisite, this graceful white-flowered ornamental onion is one of the earliest to flower. Prefers a sunny spot in moist, well-drained soil. 15-20cm.

2 ***SCILLA SIBERICA***
Easy to grow, you can never have too many of this small, brilliant blue, old-fashioned garden plant. Does best in light sandy soil in spring light but summer shade. 20cm. AGM

3 ***CORYDALIS CAVA* 'ALBIFLORA'**
A deciduous perennial with white tubular flowers above ferny foliage. Prefers part shade in well-drained soil. 15cm.

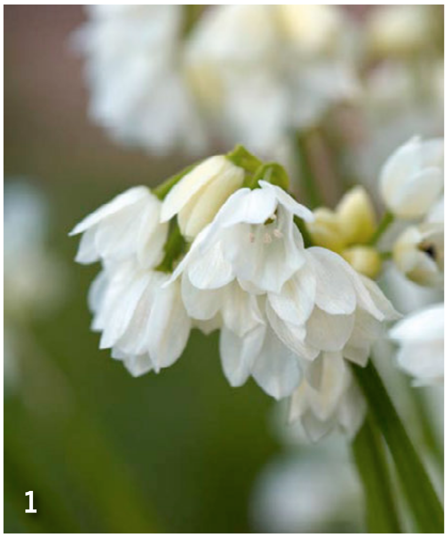
4 ***MUSCARI BOTRYOIDES* 'ALBUM'**
Heavily scented, with pretty white flowers like small pearls. Not invasive like some. Does best in well-drained soil in a sunny spot. 5cm.

5 ***ANEMONE BLANDA***
This tuberous perennial plant is native to southeastern Europe, Turkey, Lebanon, and Syria, and is valued for its daisy-like flowers that appear in early spring. 10cm. See description on page 49.

6 ***PRIMULA* 'CRESCENDO BLUE SHADES'**
A blue hybrid of the wild primrose, grown from seed sown in spring, then planted out in a shady spot well protected from slugs.

Recommended suppliers

Avon Bulbs
Tel 01460 242177, www.avonbulbs.co.uk
Broadleigh Gardens
Tel 01823 286231, www.broadleighbulbs.co.uk
Edrom Nurseries
Tel 01890 771386, www.edrom-nurseries.co.uk
Jacques Amand
Tel 020 8420 7110,
www.jacquesamandintl.com
Pottertons Nursery
Tel 01472 851714, www.pottertons.co.uk
RV Roger
Tel 01751 472226, www.rvroger.co.uk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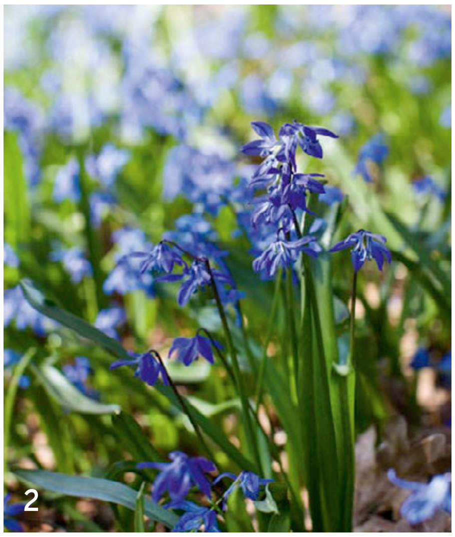
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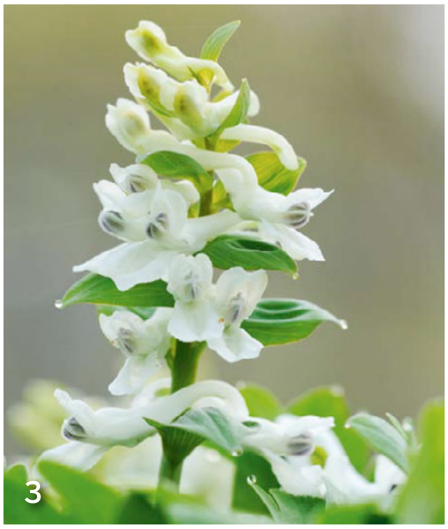
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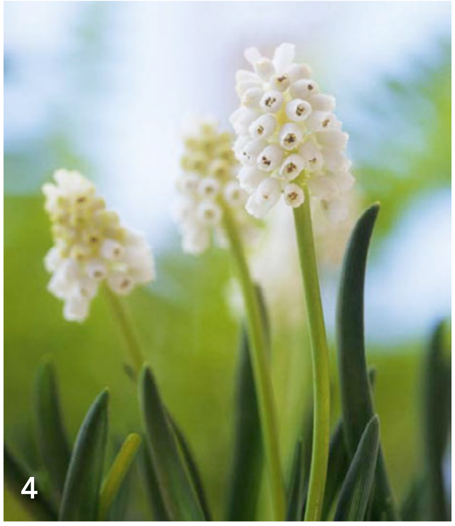
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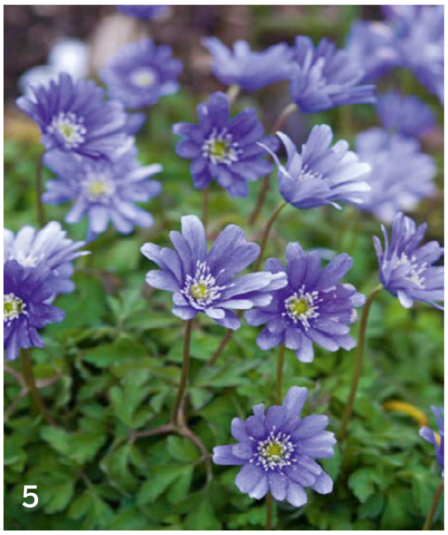
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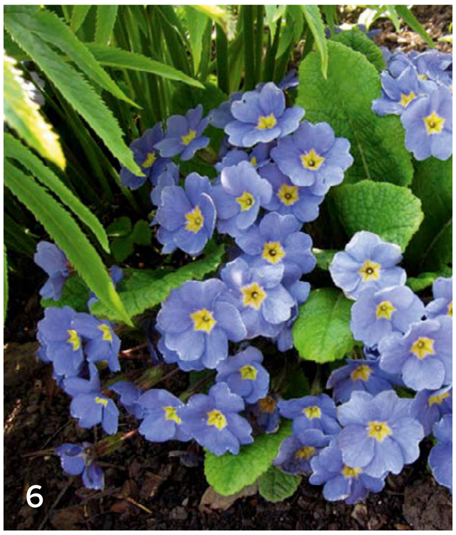
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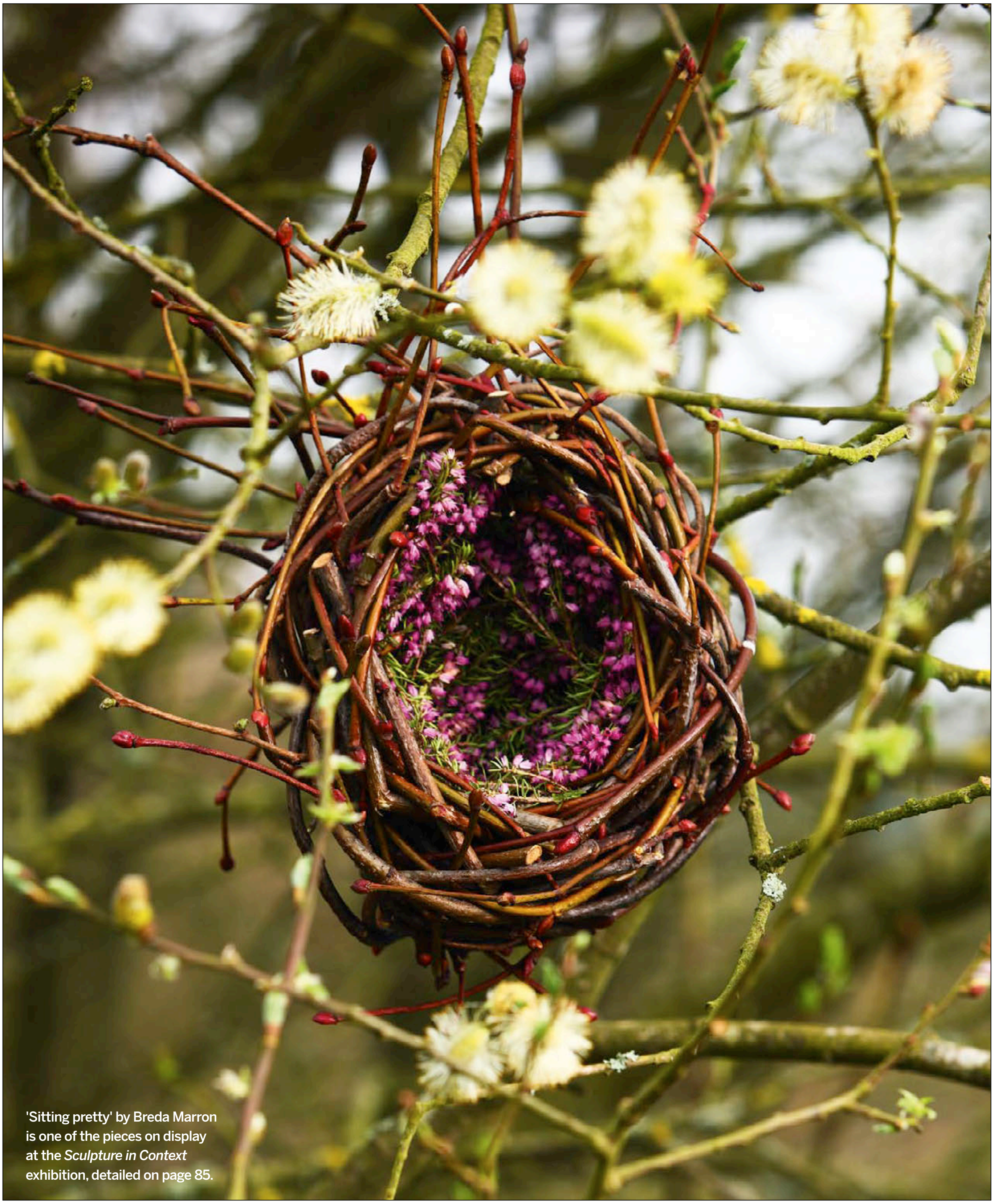

'Sitting pretty' by Breda Marron is one of the pieces on display at the *Sculpture in Context* exhibition, detailed on page 85.

RORY MOORE

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News

COMPILED BY **ANNIE GATTI**

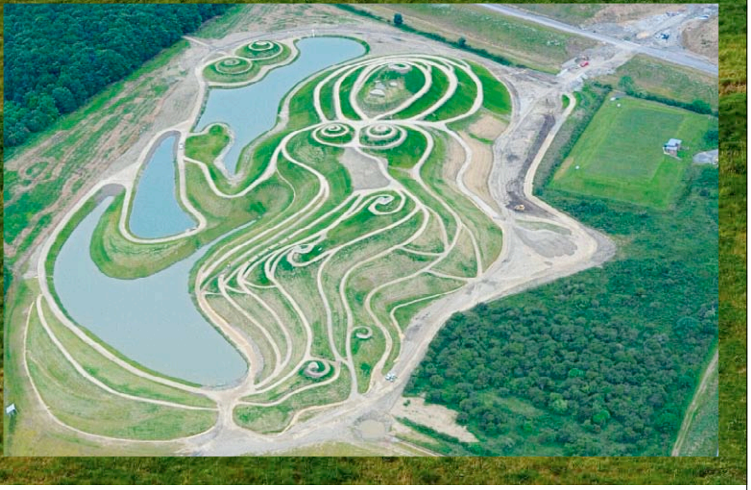
Tourists congregate atop the forehead of the 400m-long Northumberlandia.

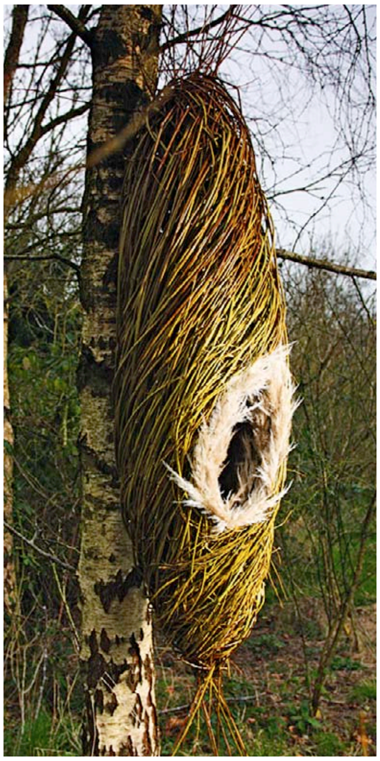
WHYEYEPHOTOGRAPHY.COM / ALAMY

LAND ART

The lady in green

'Northumberlandia', said to be the world's largest human landform, is a restoration that uses 1.5 million tonnes of material from the adjacent Shotton working mine to make the centrepiece of a new 47-acre public park near Cramlington in Northumberland. Designed by Charles Jencks, who was inspired by the contours of the distant Cheviot Hills, this vast curvaceous female form rises 30 metres high and stretches 400 metres in length. Pale stone paths create the outlines of the body, which is filled with grass. The park, managed by the Land Trust, also contains lakes with willow islands, viewing platforms and causeways. www.northumberlandia.com





RORY MOORE

EXHIBITION

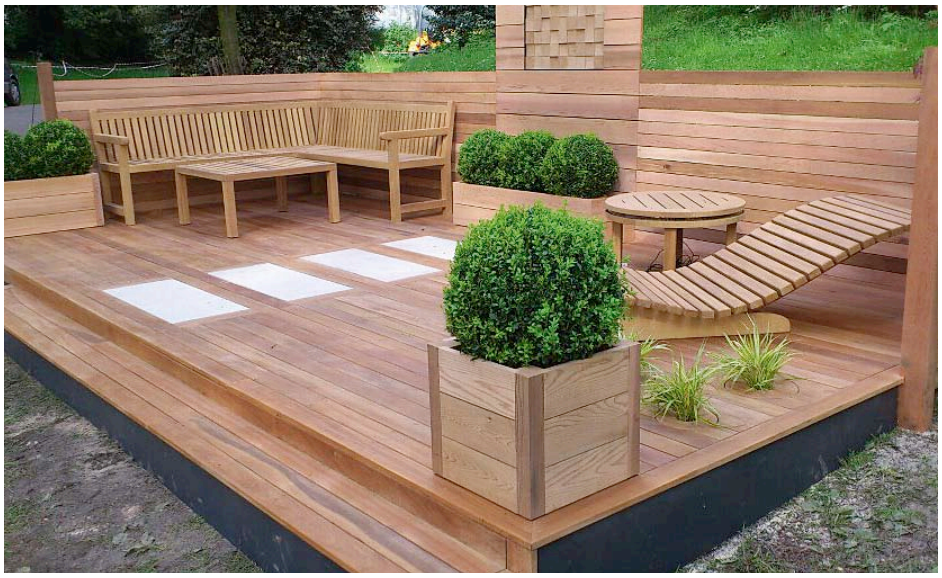
Outdoor art

Breda Marron (www.bredamarron.com) is one of more than 100 artists taking part in Ireland's largest outdoor sculpture exhibition held at the National Botanic Gardens in Dublin this month. She uses natural materials such as willow, rushes and seedheads to create her nest-like sculptures and her work is often site-specific. *Cocooned No Longer,* £1,845, made from dark-stemmed willow and lined with *Cortaderia selloana* 'Pumila', can be seen at the *Sculpture in Context* exhibition, which continues until 19 October. www.botanicgardens.ie

HIDDEN STYLE

A new range of planters, made from Fibrestone, a fibreglass-based material mixed with stone powder, is available in two styles: Chelsea, in lead grey and Contemporary, in a smooth, stone-like black or white.

Fibrestone prices range, according to size and shape, from £20 to £430. From Round Wood Trading. Tel 01435 860888; www.roundwoodtrading.com



GARDEN FURNITURE

Chelsea Flower Show pieces available

English Garden Joinery is offering a special end-of-season 25 per cent discount for GARDENS ILLUSTRATED readers on three pieces of furniture in iroko (also available in oak), as featured on their Chelsea Flower Show stand. The corner bench, designed by Jo Thompson, is available in five sizes ranging from 2m x 2m (offer price £2,160) to 2.4m x 2.4m (£2,400). The square table, 82cm x 82cm x 41cm, is £720. The rocking lounger, 195cm x 75cm, is offered at £1500 or £2800 for a pair. The offer applies to orders taken during October only. For more details and to order, email englishgardenjoinery@hotmail.co.uk or telephone 01483 351500. www.englishgardenjoinery.co.uk

AWARD WINNER

Farm redesign

Manchester-based designer David Keegan has won a Merit Award in this year's Association of Professional Landscape Designers International Landscape Awards for his redesign of Thornlea Farm in Derbyshire. Using local reclaimed materials, he created new terraces with dry stone walls and York stone paths. The view to the surrounding landscape was opened up, and native hedging and a sedum roof introduced to reinforce the link with the landscape and to encourage wildlife. David Keegan Garden Design, tel 0161 950 9509; www.dkgardens.co.uk

EXHIBITION

Environmental art

Pertaining to Things Natural, an outdoor exhibition of sculptural works and land art projects by more than 20 leading artists, including Peter Randall-Page and Keith Rand, continues this month at Chelsea Physic Garden, London. A conference on creative responses to environmental issues takes place on 8 October and on 15 October there is an evening tour of the garden by exhibition curator David Worthington, followed by supper. The exhibition continues until 31 October. Tel 020 7352 5646; www.chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk

Notebook

- **The autumn programme** of garden visits organised by the Garden Museum includes Bury Court in Surrey led by Marina Christopher on 10 October, and a visit to both Fonthill Bishop in Wiltshire, developed by designer Tania Compton, and Heale House on 11 October. www.gardenmuseum.org.uk
- **Matthew Wilson, former curator at RHS Harlow Carr,** is the new chairman of Greenfingers, the charity that makes gardens for children's hospices. The charity's 39th garden was opened at the Donna Louise Children's Hospice, Stoke-on-Trent, in July.
- **New works by sculptor David Nash** are on display from 13 October in the Nash Conservatory, Kew. These include pieces made on site. David Nash will sign copies of the illustrated book *David Nash at Kew Gardens* by Michelle Payne on 13 October, 2-4pm, at the Shirley Sherwood Gallery.
- **This is the last chance to see** the Serpentine Gallery's 12th pavilion in Kensington Gardens, this year designed by Herzog & de Meuron and Ai Weiwei. The subterranean design explores the hidden history of the previous pavilions. Closes 14 October.
- **Join head gardener Tom Coward** at Gravetye Manor, Sussex, for a tour of the gardens to see autumn colour and the ongoing restoration projects, followed by lunch at the hotel. 9 October, £45 per person. Tel 01342 810567; www.gravetyemanor.co.uk

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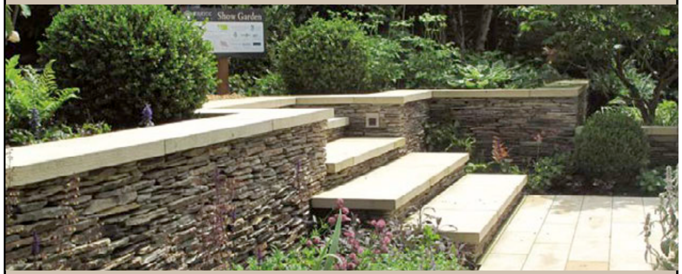

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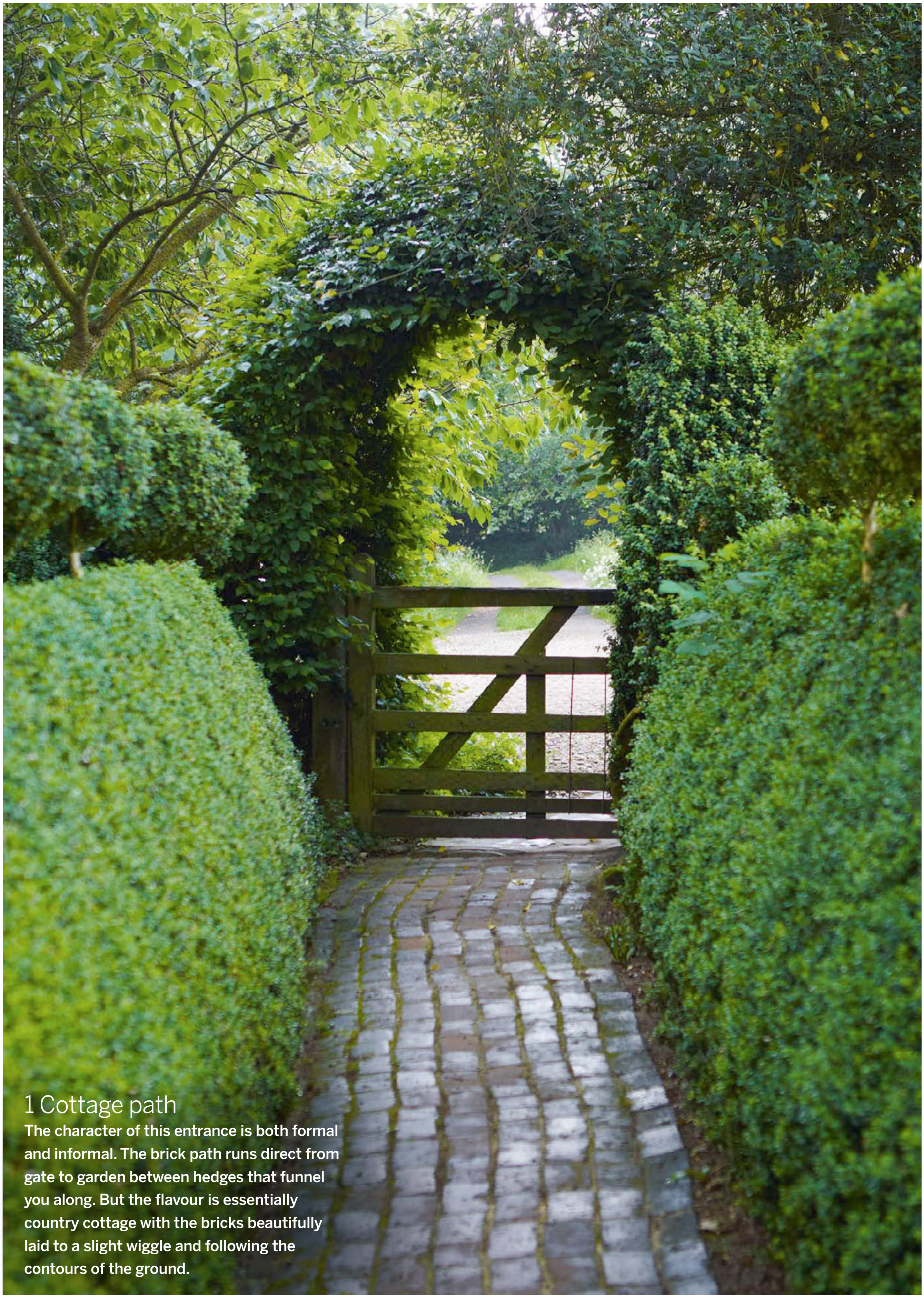


1 Cottage path

The character of this entrance is both formal and informal. The brick path runs direct from gate to garden between hedges that funnel you along. But the flavour is essentially country cottage with the bricks beautifully laid to a slight wiggle and following the contours of the ground.

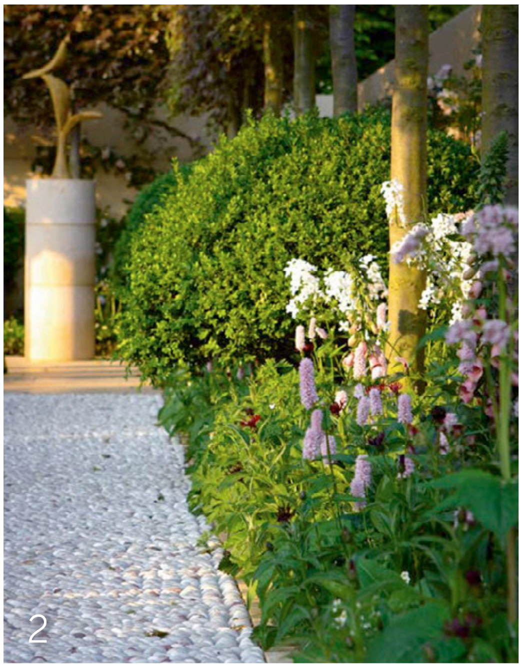
1 BRITT WILLOUGHBY DYER

Arne Maynard is a leading garden designer based in London and Monmouthshire

Paths and terraces

Good looks and practicality should go hand in hand when it comes to the design of these all-important elements

WORDS ARNE MAYNARD



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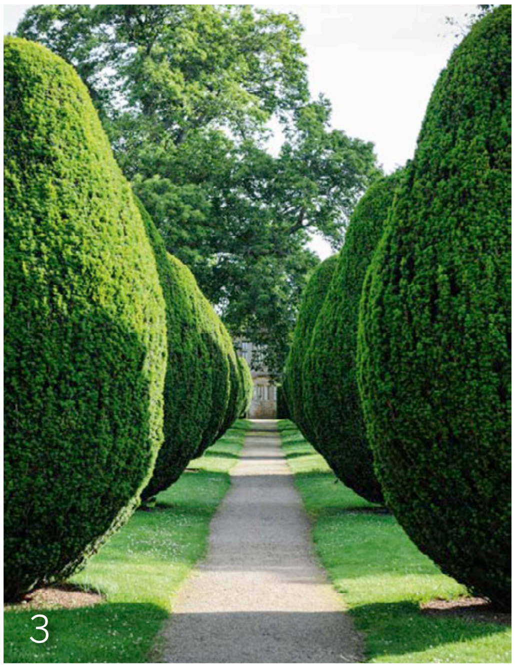

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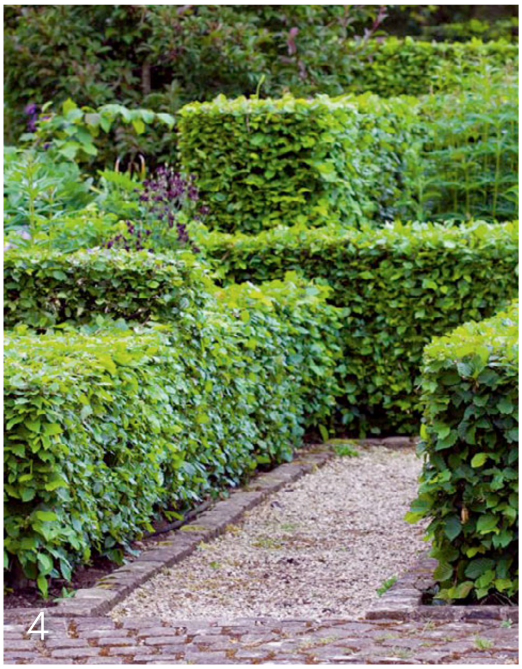

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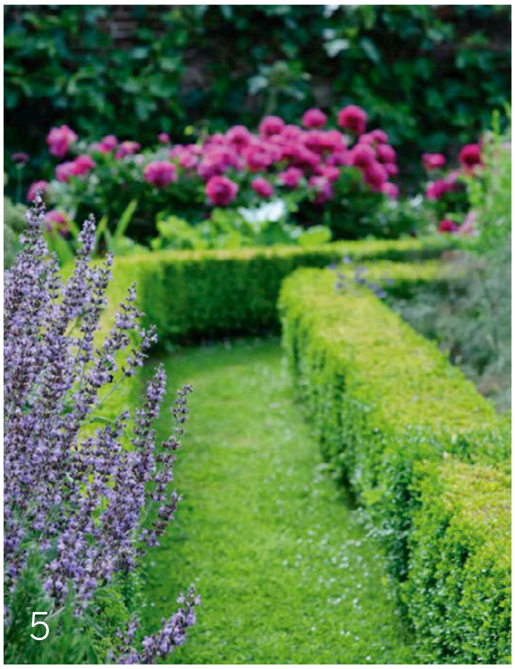


5

2 & 5 BRITT WILLOUGHBY DYER, 3 & 4 JASON INGRAM

2 Modern mosaic

This pebble mosaic path was made for my 2012 Chelsea Flower Show garden. It is deliberate and formal, and has a cleanness and modernity to it. The attention to detail, generous proportions and sculpture at its end, all announce that it is intended to be special.

3 Formal lines

A chipping path follows all four sides of the lawn at Montacute House and the trees create a colonnaded effect that heightens the sense of drama. The design is very formal, yet is subtly underplayed by the simplicity of the path and its ragged edges.

4 Interlocking shapes

This is a garden made up of differently sized square and rectangular beds. The path follows the geometry of the beds, bringing you into the heart of compartments filled with flowers.

5 Grass path

In addition to its aesthetic qualities, this box-edged grass path is integral to the design of this kitchen garden because it marks the boundaries of the vegetable beds and gives access for maintenance.

6 Dressed stone

Alchemilla mollis and thymes growing in the stone terrace of a Georgian house. This is a perfect example of the way a paved area can be dressed down and softened by the right kind of planting, making the line between grass and hard landscaping less evident.

7 Herringbone brick pattern

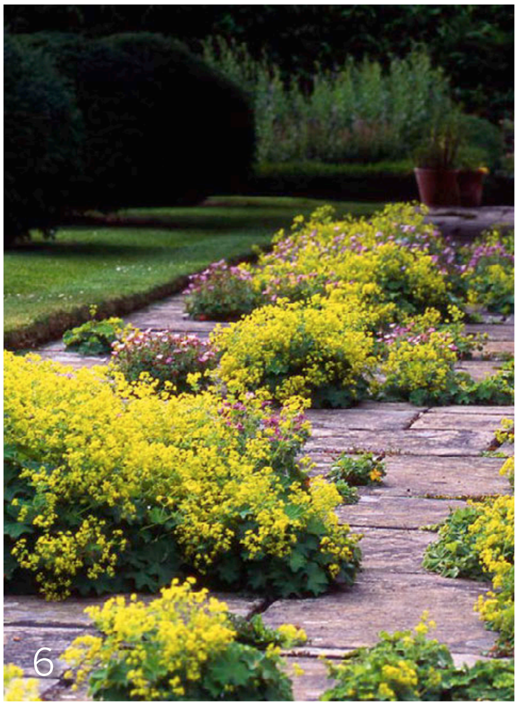
The sunken terrace was created to link the garden to kitchen level. We chose brick to give a gentle, country feel and, because stepping down to a terrace is not ideal, we masked the change of levels with box cloud hedging on either side of the steps.

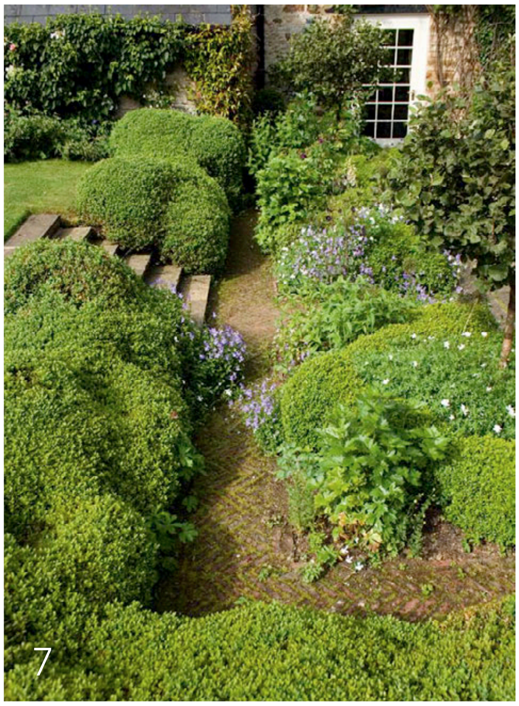
8 River terrace

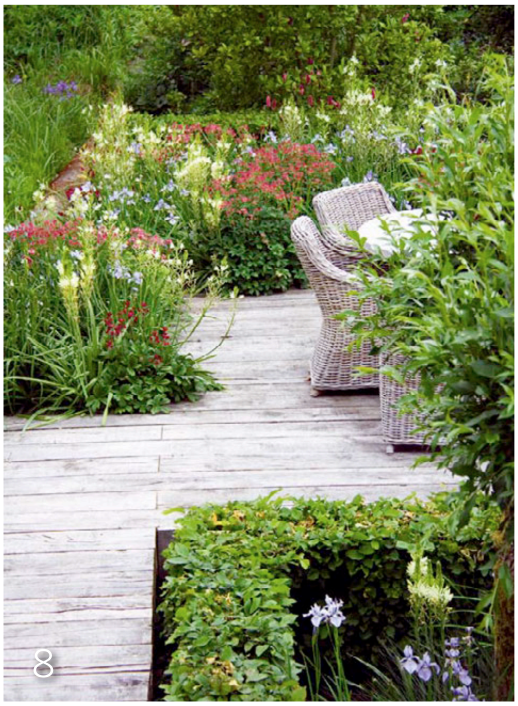
This wooden deck is made of oak sleepers and it goes right up to the water's edge, linking the house to this waterside garden. In this context, wood was the natural choice, providing a surface that associates well with the watery planting and big rattan chairs.

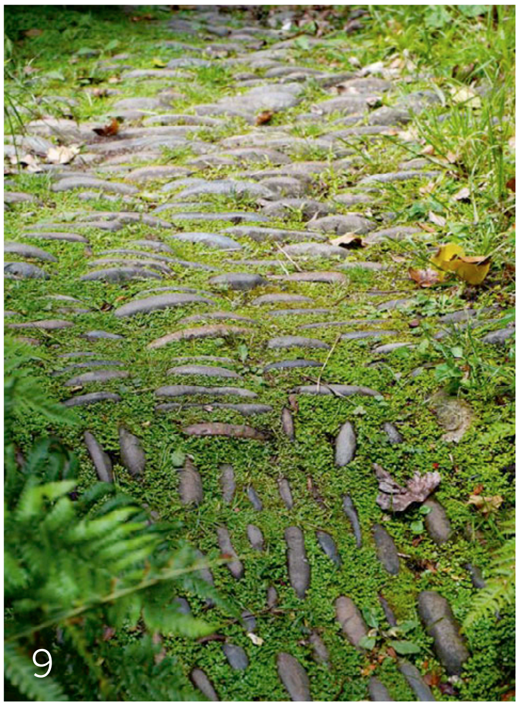
9 Cobblestones

Small paved areas tucked away in the garden don't have the formality of the terrace, and here you can be more relaxed. Textural materials such as cobbles can be bedded into a weak cement mix and the joints brushed with sand and soil, to allow creeping plants to grow.







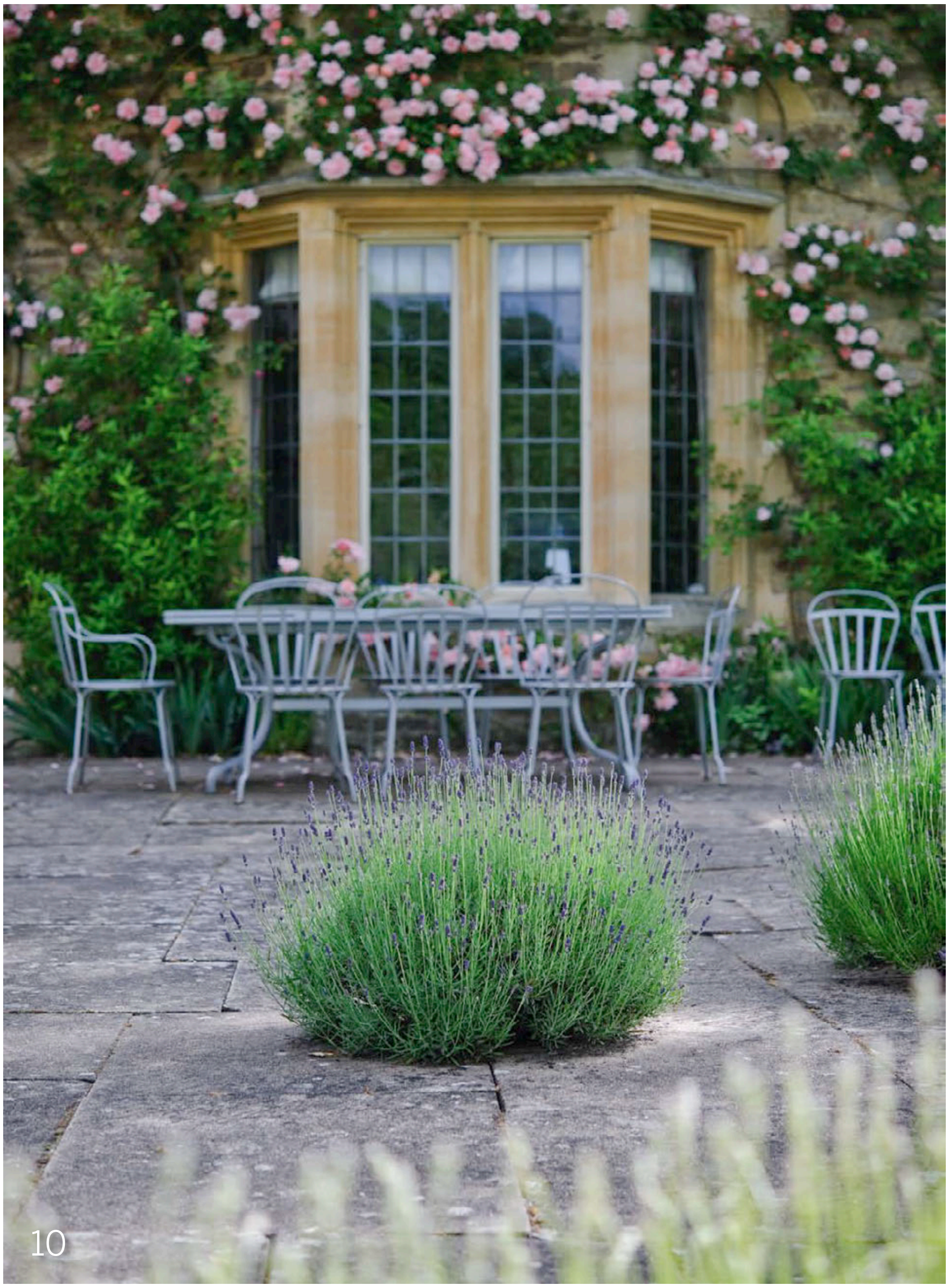


6, 7 & 9 BRITT WILLOUGHBY DYER, 8 KRISTY RAMAGE

Paths and terraces are part of the fabric of the garden, and the materials chosen to make them, their dimensions and their positioning are crucial elements in the overall design. Let's begin with paths. There are many ways to create them, from mown grass, brick or stone, but within the range there are also varying degrees of formality and informality, and what might be described as a hierarchy of use.

The simplest, most casual kind of paths, are those trodden into the ground over time, usually as the quickest route to a destination. At the other end of the spectrum are the big, formal, designed paths that act as circulation routes around the garden, form its main arteries and may also act as divisions within it. In general, the wider the path, the more formal and dominant it will appear and this sense of formality is reinforced if it is also straight, with a vista along it and an end in sight. A narrow path that wanders so you can never see the end, has a different kind of use and appeal, it draws you along and invites you to explore.

In the same way, choice of surface relates to function and purpose. A soft, mown grass path makes a beautiful secondary route in an informal part of the garden, but hard-landscaping,



10

10 JASON INGRAM

10 Concrete terrace

This is a big terrace of concrete slabs, which initially we intended to take up. But as the concrete was weathering gradually, a compromise was reached. We knocked corners off some slabs and planted lavenders in the spaces, and this has helped add texture and softness.

Suppliers

Hanson Aggregates for limestone chippings.
Tel 0845 601 6643,
www.hanson-europe.com

Solopark plc for reclaimed bricks and Yorkstone.
Tel 01223 834663,
www.solopark.co.uk

Vastern Timber for oak and a good range of other British hardwoods and softwoods.
Tel 0800 135 7013,
www.vastern.co.uk

all-weather materials are usually needed for a primary path to the front door. Materials can be combined or dressed down and softened with planting to suit the mood and context.

Whereas a path takes you on a journey, a terrace is a destination, and as a place to sit, entertain and eat, is most useful when adjacent to the house. House terraces also have an architectural function, in that they provide an intermediate area between house and garden. They should feel generous and sufficiently wide: one-third the height of the house is a useful rule of thumb. I also like to leave room between the terrace and the house for beds, even if they are only wide enough for planting climbers to soften the terrace and clothe the house walls.

House period and style are the most important guides to choosing materials, but stone or brick are the most usual, stone for formality, brick to give a more country feel. As with paths, hard landscaping on terraces can be combined and softened with planting. Occasionally we use limestone chippings or cobbles, and in the right environment, timber in the form of big timber sleepers, can be very effective. □

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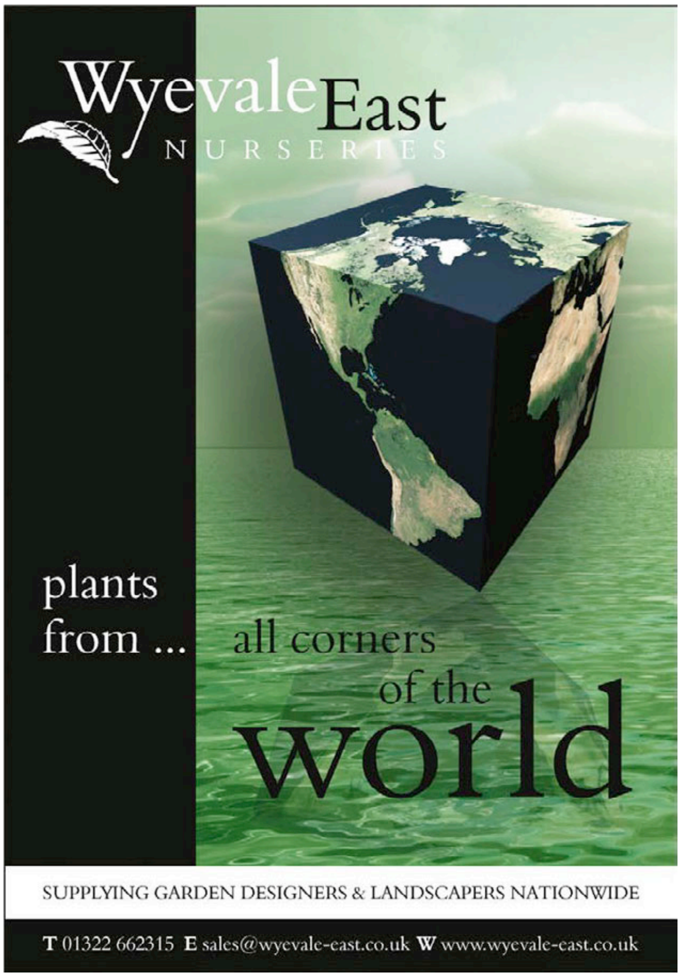
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Book reviews and Crossword

Stipa gigantea glows golden in the sunset – one of Carol Klein's favourite plants, as revealed in her latest book, reviewed over the page.

JONATHAN BUCKLEY

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INVENTED DESIGNED & MADE IN BRITAIN

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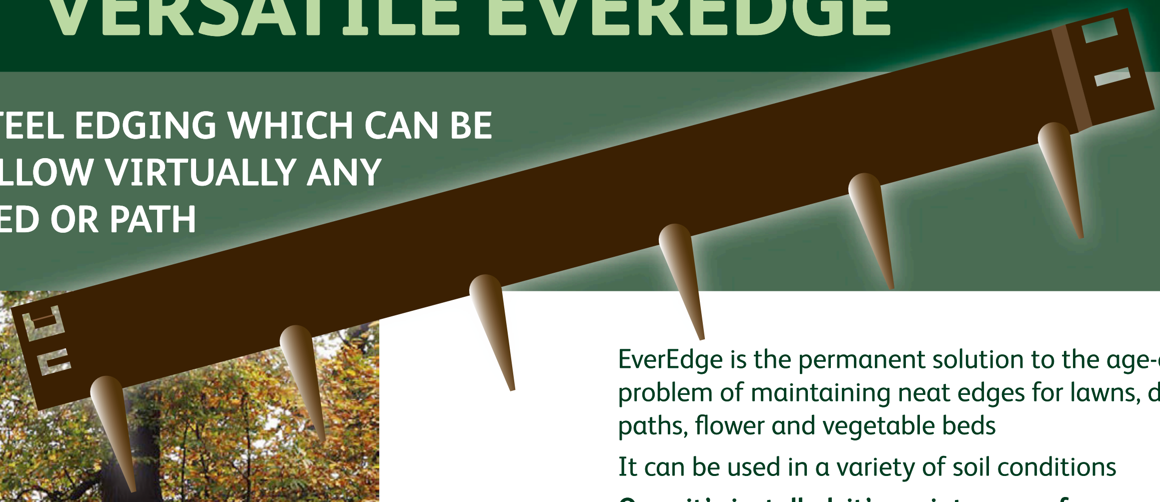

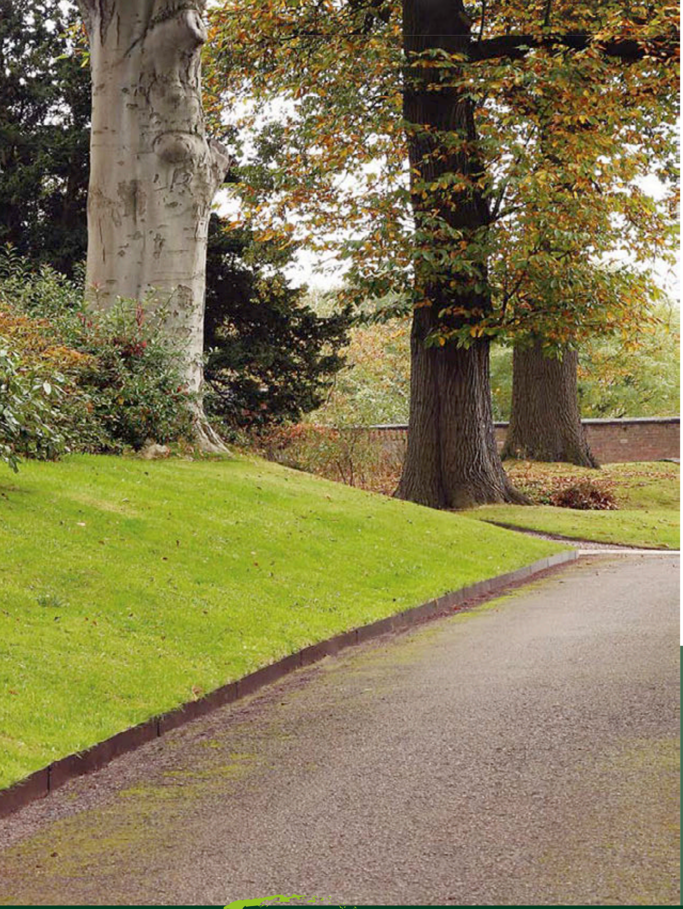

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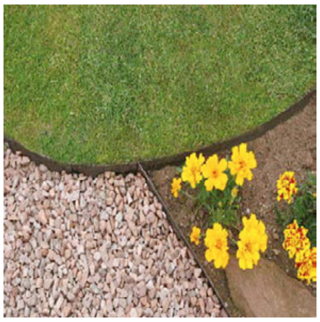

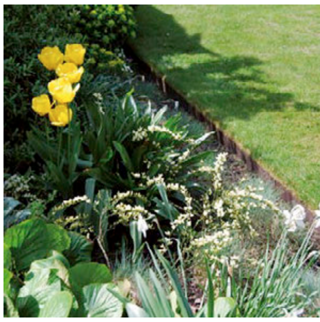

EverEdge is an all-in-one system

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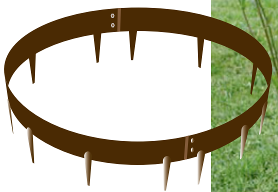

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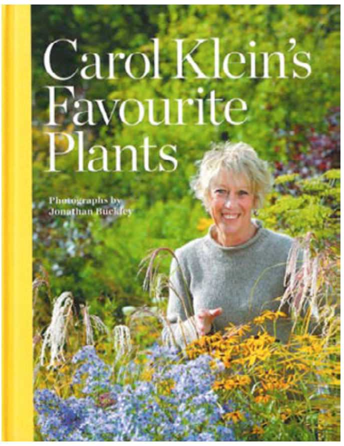
Book reviews



CAROL KLEIN'S FAVOURITE PLANTS

by Carol Klein

Octopus Books, £16.99
ISBN 978-1845337056

Carol Klein has that engaging quality of writing exactly as she speaks. With her distinctive turn of phrase you can all but hear her husky voice extolling the virtues of a particular plant when you read her words.

Her latest offering is actually a new edition and renaming of her very first book *Plant Personalities*. There's a nice picture of Carol on the cover and a new style of binding, but the contents are the same, so if you have the earlier title on your bookshelves you will already be aware of the charms this book contains. For example, who, other than Carol, would say that *Geranium psilostemon* 'exhibits all the qualities of the *joie de vivre* club'.

Anyone who has been to her Devon garden will know that Carol grows a good plant – and arranges them to stunning effect in her borders and containers. This book draws on her experience at Glebe Cottage, highlighting her favourites and the various roles they can play within a garden. Chapter headings are highly descriptive of how the selected plants can be used. So 'Will-o'-the wisps and Wafty Whisperers' introduce sound, light and movement, while 'Gatecrashers' are the self-seeders that arrive uninvited and 'Drama Queens' are the plants that stop you in your tracks.

It's a memorable way of categorising the different types of plant that go towards completing the tapestry of a well-planted border, or creating glamorous containers. You'll find yourself rethinking your planting and eyeing up plants in a nursery to find just the right 'Shooting Star' or 'Seductive Sophisticate' to complete the picture.

Carol Klein's Favourite Plants also delivers a wealth of experience and practical advice on how and where to grow the plants, which varieties to choose and, in some instances, how to propagate them successfully. Carol's text is accompanied by sumptuous plant portraits by Jonathan Buckley.

Stephanie Donaldson is the contributing gardens editor of Country Living *magazine.*

JONATHAN BUCKLEY

Carol's definition of 'drama queens' is nicely illustrated in the plant choice for the Exotic Garden at Great Dixter.

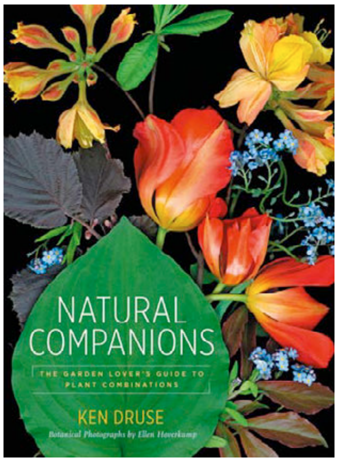
book offer

RRP £16.99. **Reader offer price £14.99** including p&p.

Book reviews

NATURAL COMPANIONS: THE GARDEN LOVER'S GUIDE TO PLANT COMBINATIONS by Ken Druse and Ellen Hoverkamp

Steward, Tabori & Chang £24.99
ISBN: 978-1584799016


NATURAL COMPANIONS
THE GARDEN LOVER'S GUIDE TO PLANT COMBINATIONS
KEN DRUSE
Botanical Photographs by Ellen Hoverkamp

Gardening doyenne Rosemary Verey developed a habit of gathering a posy of flowers and foliage from her garden each day, both to focus her thoughts on what each season holds in the way of unexpected treasures and also to allow close study of the plants she was growing. It's a practice that author Ken Druse and photographer Ellen Hoverkamp have explored to fascinating and original effect in this weighty book.

Using a flatbed scanner, arrangements of flowers and leafy cuttings have been placed, specimen-like, against an inky black background, creating large-scale compositions akin to botanical paintings, with each plant and flower brought into magically sharp focus. There is thought and reason behind the combinations, as Druse and Hoverkamp have scoured their own and friends' gardens for groupings that are based on colour palettes, the seasons, flower families and location. Numbered keys are included.

Natural Companions is a very beautiful book – many of the compositions are exquisitely put together and the effect is a bit like taking pie slices through possible planting schemes in order to analyse them in greater detail. Where possible, the plants are positioned to hint at where they might appear in a border, with low ground cover in the foreground and taller plants towards the top of the frame. Some back-up photographs of plants growing in borders are also included – perhaps there could usefully have been more of these.

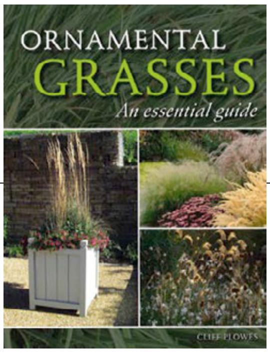
Accompanying Hoverkamp's photographs is Druse's well-informed prose. He gardens organically and is one of America's leading proponents of a naturalistic style and I find his writing lyrical and engaging. His plant knowledge runs deep and the book is peppered with interesting asides (did you know that *arisaemas* can change their gender from year to year to suit the environmental conditions?) that make this an enjoyable bedtime browse as well as a book to keep coming back to for inspiration.

Although primarily written for the American market, with references to North American hardiness zones, this does not detract from the usefulness of the book. Druse has taken pains to raid the gardens of friends who garden in a wide range of conditions.

Paula McWaters is a gardening writer and editor.

book offer

RRP £24.99. **Reader offer price £22.99** including p&p.



ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

by Cliff Plowes
Crowood, £16.99
ISBN 978-1847973825

This book from a specialist nurseryman covers all the bona-fide grasses you are likely to want, need or see, and also includes sedges, rushes, restios and other indispensable ornamentals with a grass-like persona. An introductory history on garden use provides useful context and the cultivation and propagation section is informative and visually helpful. However, a clearer understanding of the botany of the various groups would have benefited from diagramatic illustration. Half the book contains an encyclopaedic compilation of the various species and cultivars grouped by height (tall, medium and low-growing) and then by requirement (sun, shade and moisture). Each profile is succinct and explicit, providing height, spread, hardiness, and specific characteristics. While many photographs meet requirements, some don't pass muster, and the appendix of grasses for specific uses and sites misses opportunities to promote further use, such as for containers or cut flowers. The inventory of sources for plants and seed is excellent. In all, this is an inexpensive guide that still informs on many levels.

Ian Hodgson is a garden writer, editor and horticultural consultant.

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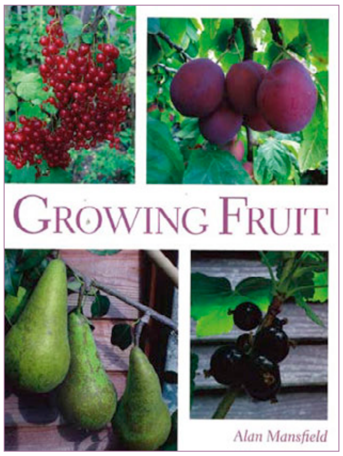
GROWING FRUIT

by Alan Mansfield

Crowood, £16.99

ISBN 978-1847973894



Alan Mansfield is the latest in a venerable line of fruit enthusiasts who have sought to encourage others to share the pleasures of what is erroneously perceived as a complex art. The cover notes proclaim 'this practical book cuts though the myth and mystique, and explains the skills and techniques required to produce an abundant and delicious crop' and it certainly achieves this aim. There is enough information to encourage but not confound beginners and those with an understanding of gardening. Alan also makes every effort to cajole, illuminate and most of all, open the eyes of the sceptic or faint-hearted who would like to grow fruit, but dare not.

Growing Fruit is a pleasure to read; leading the reader from planning to cultivation, in a series of assured logical steps – this is the clear, informed voice of experience and although an enthusiastic authority on redcurrants, he has obviously grown the other fruit, too. The text is clear, steadily paced and filled with useful detail, without being too academic, while the layout instils a sense of space, encouraging readers to rest awhile and absorb. Each technical term is clearly explained in the text and the comprehensive glossary is extremely helpful. Most importantly of all, there are excellent explanations and images showing how to prune – arguably the main reason why fruit growing is so widely ignored.

Author as photographer, usually a limitation, is in this case, an advantage, the large, clear images enticing and informing in equal measure. He knows exactly what pictures are needed to complement the text; the uninitiated can see clearly what a terminal bud or bitter pit looks like and a rustic sense of scale is added by using a strategically placed hand or even, delightfully, a chicken's egg for comparison. The beauty of fruit is celebrated, particularly plump, succulent cherries and glossy strawberries. He seems to be asking 'Can you really resist growing such visual and culinary pleasures that fruit provides?' The answer is a resounding 'No'.

Alan is the ideal expert head gardener, a calm and engaging voice that ensures you can achieve your fruit-growing aims.

Matthew Biggs is a writer, broadcaster and lecturer.

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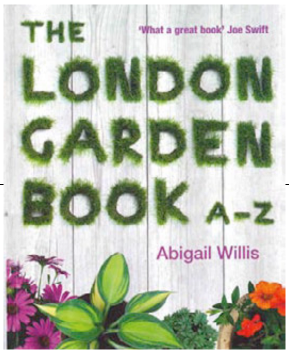


THE LONDON GARDEN BOOK A-Z

by Abigail Willis

Metro Publications £14.99

ISBN 978-1902910420

This is a hard-working book – but not hard work for the reader. On the contrary, Abigail Willis's writing is accessible, accurate and lively, making this a must-have for all London gardeners as well as visitors to the capital.

The author has taken no easy short-cuts. Yes, there are necessary entries on the more obvious places, such as Chelsea Physic Garden, as well as gardens that still feel like 'finds' – there are four pages on the idiosyncratic EA Bowles's Myddelton House, as well as entries on Thames Barrier Park and the marvellous South London Botanical Institute, with its extensive herbarium and mycological library.

But every reader will also surely make new discoveries – in my case, getting under the skin of the 'barge gardens' on moored houseboats. There is a lovely little piece on London's lost gardens, such as Sayes Court, and I enjoyed the section on London plants – the plane tree, of course, but also the plant I was taught to call fireweed (it was after all the horticultural incarnation of Blitz spirit, growing first on bombsites) but which everyone else seems to call rosebay willowherb. I honestly cannot praise this book highly enough.

Tim Richardson is a garden critic and regular columnist.

book offer

RRP £14.99. **Reader offer price £13.99** including p&p.

Book reviews

GIFTS FROM THE GARDEN
100 GORGEOUS HOMEGROWN PRESENTS
DEBORA ROBERTSON

GIFTS FROM THE GARDEN

by Debora Robertson
Kyle Books, £16.99
ISBN: 978-0857830814

Home-made gifts generally fall into two camps: those done with style and thoughtfulness, and those made with thrift rather than the recipient in mind. Fortunately, this book focuses on the former and offers over 100 ideas for presents made with homegrown garden flowers and herbs. Making your own presents, rather like making your own clothes, used to be a commonplace activity in most households, and although fewer people find time to do it these days, it's definitely becoming fashionable once more with a distinct rise in magazines and books dedicated to the subject of crafting. Beautifully photographed and nicely styled, the book features a wide range of gifts for the home as well as toiletries, food and preserves, many of which are pretty and highly feminine. Chapters include 'Straight from the garden', 'Herbs and flowers' and 'Fruit, vegetables & nuts'.

Author Debora Robertson conveys her enthusiasm for the subject and presents the instructions in a straightforward, easily understandable manner. She also includes interesting information panels on related subjects (such as the specific varieties and growing techniques for a plant mentioned and attractive packaging ideas). Alongside the somewhat predictable plant-based gifts such as pot-pourri, Christmas wreaths, toffee apples and chutneys, there is a predominance of original and attractive ideas. The ones that I'm particularly keen to make include: marigold cheese, rose petal and pistachio meringues, fragrant firelighters and a cook's windowbox. There are also lots of interesting ideas for packaging and presentation. Alongside the comprehensive index, there's a short list of suppliers. Most of these relate to plants, but it would have been useful to see suppliers of such things as pretty wrapping papers, ribbons, florist supplies, bottles and containers, as these are the things that set many of the gifts apart and were evidently carefully sourced for the photos.

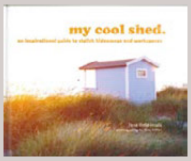
This book provides plenty of ideas for a range of charming gifts and the fact that they are home-made will no doubt enhance the recipient's enjoyment of them.

Juliet Roberts is editor of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED

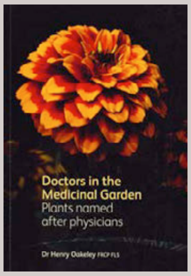
book offer

RRP £16.99. **Reader offer price £14.99** each including p&p.

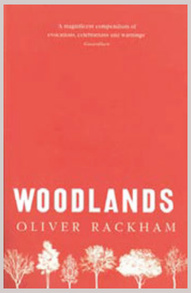
Other recently released books for gardeners



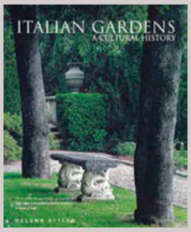
MY COOL SHED
by Jane Field-Lewis
Inspirational ideas for transforming your shed.
Pavilion, £14.99
ISBN 978-1862059337


Doctors in the Medicinal Garden
Plants named after physicians
Dr Henry Oakeley

DOCTORS IN THE MEDICINAL GARDEN
by Dr Henry Oakeley
Plants named after doctors, and the history behind them.
Royal College of Physicians, £15
ISBN 978-1860164681



WOODLANDS
by Oliver Rackham
An in-depth look at trees of the British landscape by an eminent naturalist.
HarperCollins, £14,99
ISBN 978-0007481040



ITALIAN GARDENS
by Helena Attlee
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Reader offers

Offer one

Save 25% on exclusive bulb collections from Avon Bulbs

Inspired by the spring planting combinations from Helen Dillon (see page 76), award-winning bulb specialist Avon Bulbs has put together five collections for readers at a 25% saving. Each collection is based around a colour theme and can be planted now for a spring display next year. Ideal for naturalised plantings or planted in a series of containers.

NATURAL Offer price £15.68 (normal price £20.90)

A *Fritillaria meleagris* x 15
B *Narcissus* 'Thalia' x 10
C *Anemone blanda* x 25
D *Narcissus obvallaris* x 10
E *Narcissus poeticus* x 5

PURPLE AND ORANGE Offer price £22.88 (normal price £30.50)

A *Tulipa* 'Prinses Irene' x 10
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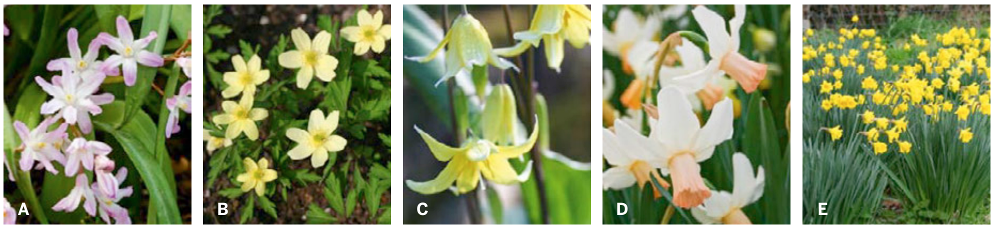
C *Tulipa* 'Little Princess' x 20
D *Ixiolirion tataricum* x 15
E *Allium cristophii* x 6

PINK AND YELLOW Offer price £22.65 (normal price £30.20)



A *Chionodoxa* 'Pink Giant' x 20
B *Anemone* x *lipsiensis* x 6
C *Erythronium* 'Pagoda' x 6
D *Narcissus* 'Bell Song' x 10
E *Narcissus obvallaris* x 10

WHITE AND GREEN Offer price £20.78 (normal price £27.70)

A *Erythronium* 'White Beauty' x 3
B *Fritillaria meleagris* subvar. *alba* x 5
C *Anemone virescens* x 3
D *Ornithogalum nutans* x 10
E *Ornithogalum magnum* x 3

BLUE AND WHITE Offer price £17.85 (normal price £23.80)

A *Scilla siberica* x 20
B *Muscari botryoides* 'Album' x 10
C *Anemone blanda* x 25
D *Muscari azureum* x 20
E *Ipheion* 'Alberto Castillo' x 6

IMAGE COURTESY OF AVONB BULBS EXCEPT BLUE AND WHITE IMAGES A PERNILLA BERGDAHL, B JOHN GLOVER, BOTH GAP PHOTOS

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Order hotline: 01460 242177 quoting 'Gardens Illustrated' to gain your discount.
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Offer two

Japanese anemone offer

Japanese anemones start blooming in late summer and carry on well into the autumn, providing a show of interest late in the season. This offer chooses three of the favourites featured in our Plant Profile on page 48. Plants grow to 90cm in height, 60cm spread.

***Anemone* 'Honorine Jobert'**
Crisp, white flowers on tall, slender stems.

***Anemone* 'Prinz Heinrich'**
This vigorous cultivar needs room to show off its beautiful blooms.

***Anemone* 'Pamina'**
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3 bare roots of any cultivar for £9.99
Buy 9 bare roots (3 of each) for £19.97 – save £10

Order online: visit www.thompson-morgan.com/GIL12
Order hotline: 0844 573 1686 (quote GIL12)
Order by post: Please fill in the coupon below and send it with a cheque or payment details to the address in the coupon.
Offer closes: 31 October 2012.

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Anemone Offer, Dept GIL12,
PO Box 99, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2SN.

	Anemone	Price	Qty	Total
11878	**'Honorine Jobert'** 3 bare root plants	£9.99		£
11896	**'Prinz Heinrich'** 3 bare root plants	£9.99		£
11953	**'Pamina'** 3 bare root plants	£9.99		£
11999	***Japanese Anemone Collection*** 9 (3 of each) **Save £10**	£19.97		£
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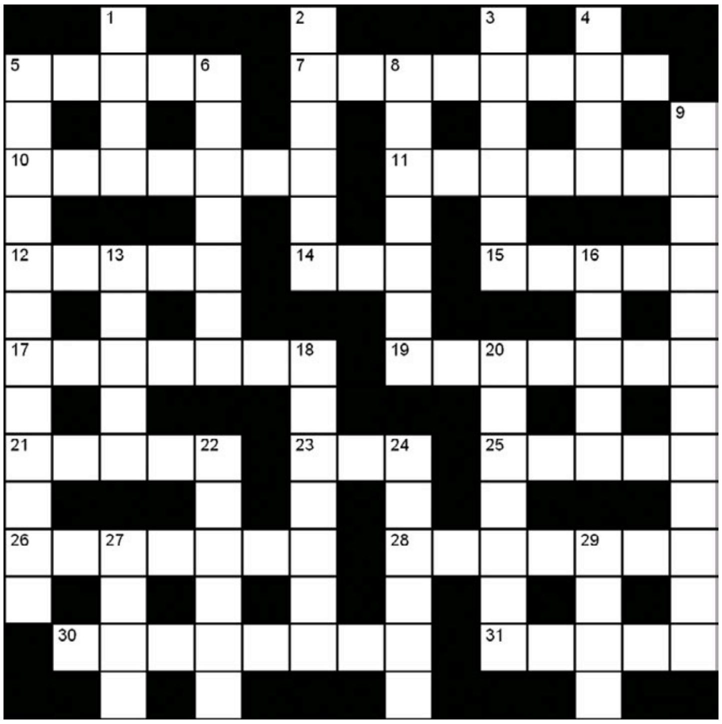

ACROSS

5 Legumes excited when full of them! (5)
7 Flowers profiled this month, one means to move? (8)
10 Large strawberry-shaped tomato – "in phlox," he articulates (7)
11 In the open air, duo root out (7)
12 USA's 'potato state' is partly arid, a hothouse! (5)
14 Flooded valley disturbed air (3)
15 Spring bulb – in tree form, it's of the *Liriodendron* genus (5)
19 Jamaican pepper tree of Myrtle family (7)
21 Checks flower stalks (5)
23 A very long time … in paeonies (3)
25 Genus of tupelo tree – North says different (5)
26 Disease possibly incurred via a cut from a thorn (7)
28 A dwarf euphorbia Bond likes shaken not stirred? (7)
30 Firmed in soil round newly planted shrub (6,2)
31 Part of plant that, in propagation, is grafted to stock (5)

DOWN

1 A garden way featured in Arne Maynard's 'Design Ideas' (4)
2 George, garden designer and RHS gold medal winner, right inside damaged acer (6)
3 An iris variety – in part, custom title (6)
4 Harold, designer of Buscot Park's water garden (4)
5 Ecological variety as favoured by Noël Kingsbury – makes tidy ivies, bro! (12)
6 Spices things up four times in a year! (7)
8 Outermost layer of a fruit's wall – 'Praecox' perhaps (7)
9 Revolutionary method of growing vegetables in eg West Dean's kitchen garden (4,8)
13 A specialism of Wisley's Jim Arbury, big for New York (5)
16 In short, Fenland county famous for its bulb fields (5)
18 Applied eg manure – got in the habit? (7)
20 Natural soil-enrichers – chap cultivated rues (7)
22 Solitary, less showy sort of flower (6)
24 National Trust gardens in sunny Mansfield (6)
27 Secured – that is, inside tops of tropical *Dieffenbachia* (4)
29 Spring-flowering bulb found in Fair Isle (4)

SOLUTIONS TO THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD WILL BE PRINTED NEXT MONTH

SEPTEMBER'S SOLUTIONS

ACROSS: 1 *Ficus* **4** Blossom **8** *Plantago* **9** *Scilla* **10/18** Self-seeders **11** Lakes **12** Neat **13** Pared **15** Soilless **17** Dies down **20** Lemon **22** Skye **23** Revel **25** Lacy **27** Forest **28** Lavender **29** Tassels **30** Diane.

DOWN: 1 False **2** Conifer **3** Snail **4** Brookes **5** Oasis **6** Spignel **7** Malmaison **13** Pricks out **14** Duo **16** Ill **19** Nivalis **21** *Molinia* **23** Ratte **24** Livid **26** Cleve.

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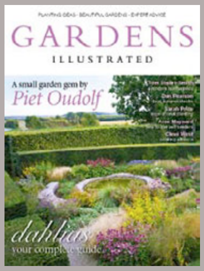

SEPTEMBER 2012
Piet Oudolf's small garden gem; best dahlia selection; Tom Stuart-Smith family garden; autumn shrubs; how to use self-seeders; allotment recipes

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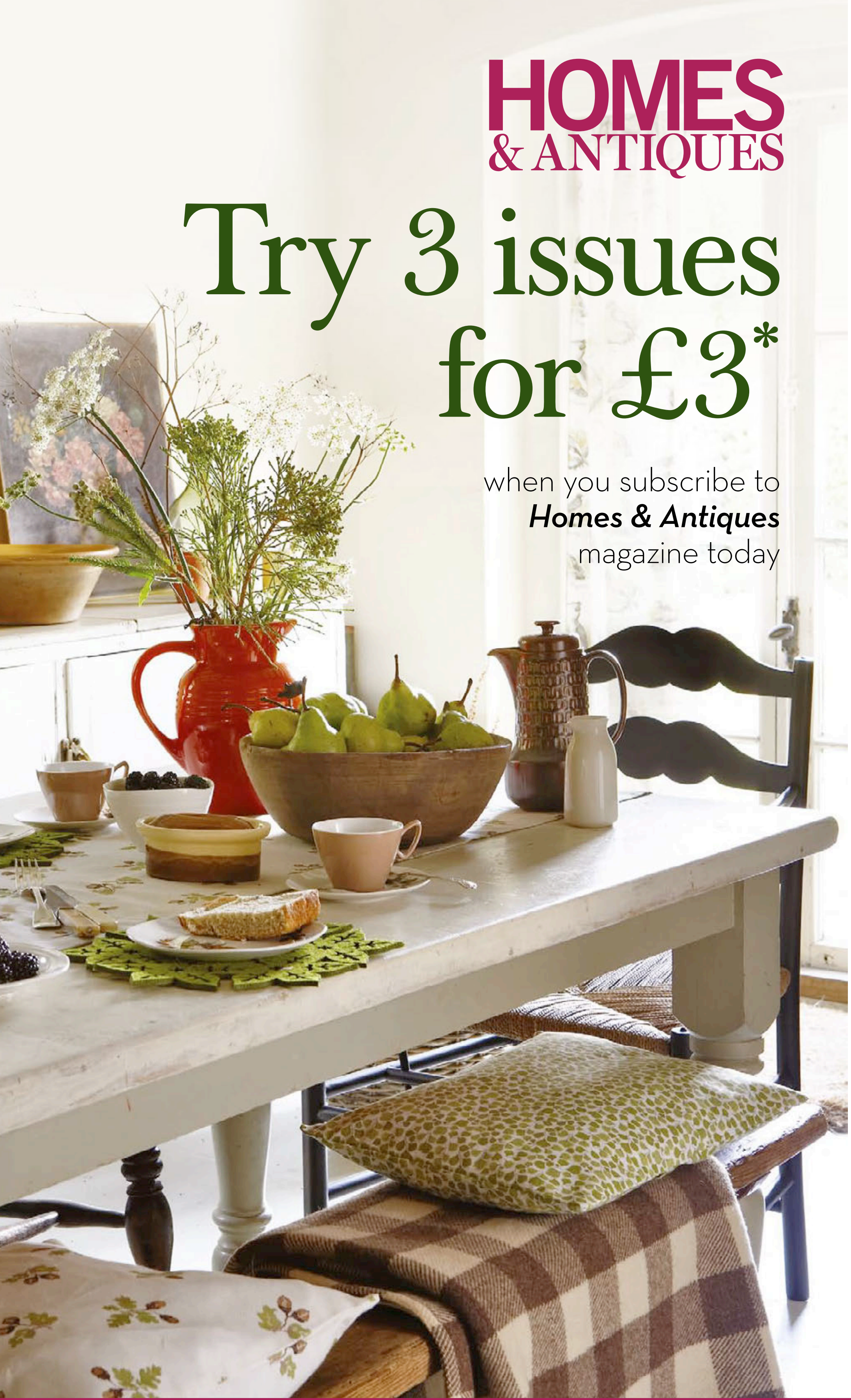

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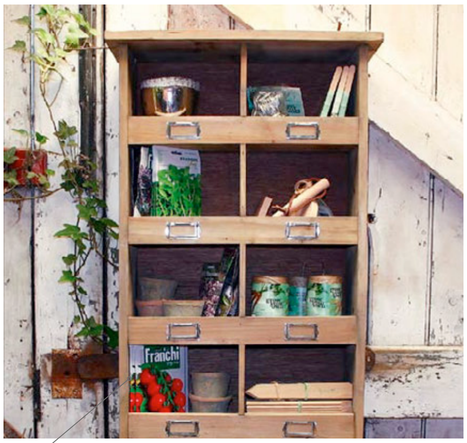

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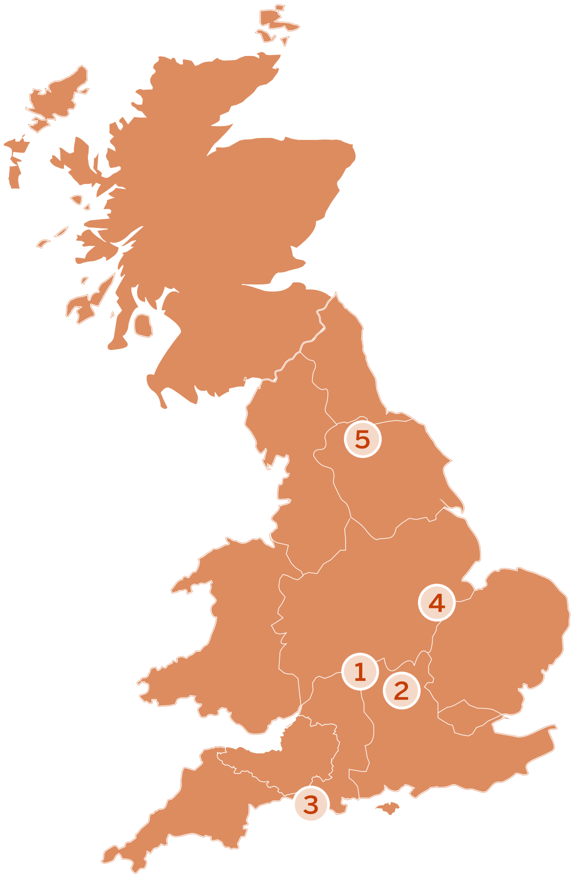
Autumn Colour

Autumn brings us a truly magnificent combination of colours, and the gardens below provide a real experience of that autumnal magic.



1. BATSFORD ARBORETUM

Enjoy one of nature's biggest fireworks displays at Batsford this autumn. The 55-acre arboretum will be a blaze of colour as the stars of the show, the maples, take centre stage. Enjoy breathtaking views at every turn, fabulous freshly baked lunches and teas in the Garden Terrace Cafe and beautiful plants from the Plant Centre and Garden Shop.

ADDRESS **Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire GL56 9AB**
WEBSITE **www.batsarb.co.uk**
TEL **01386 701441**

2. WATERPERRY GARDENS

Celebrate our traditional apple cultivars at Apple Weekend – 5 to 7 October. Apple and juice tastings, identification, advice and information about growing fruit trees, orchard tours and fun for all the family. Beautiful gardens, a quality plant centre and garden shop, gallery, gift barn and teashop. Our new Arts, Crafts and Gardening Course leaflet 2012/13 out now!

ADDRESS **Waterperry, near Wheatley, Oxfordshire OX33 1JZ**
WEBSITE **www.waterperrygardens.co.uk**
TEL **01844 339254**

3. ABBOTSBURY SUBTROPICAL GARDENS

The Enchanted Floodlit Garden takes place every night from 17 October to 4 November. Theatrical, coloured floodlights are used to uplight the splendid autumn colours and architectural shapes of the trees and foliage. Candles in lanterns are placed along the pathways to lead visitors through the stunning lighting effects. Lights go on at dusk until 8.30pm. Gardens open from 10am.

ADDRESS **Bullers Way, Abbotsbury, Dorset DT3 4LA**
WEBSITE **www.abbotsburygardens.co.uk** TEL **01305 871387**

4. BARNSDALE GARDENS

Barnsdale's 39 gardens are a 'must-see' this autumn and winter; a riot of fiery foliage and berries, sparkling seedheads and late flowers, and extensive productive areas full of great ideas for a wide range of winter produce.

Cut out this box and bring it along for 2-for-1 entry, valid 1 October 2012–31 March 2013.

Image: *Clerodendrum trichotomum* var.*fargesii* c.Pip Warters

ADDRESS **The Avenue, Exton, Rutland LE15 8AH**
WEBSITE **www.barnsdalegardens.co.uk** TEL **01572 813200**

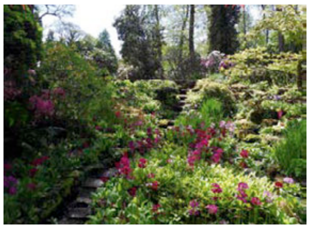
5. THORP PERROW ARBORETUM

Fungus Forays at 1pm
Sunday 30 September,
Sunday 7, 21 October,
Sunday 4 & 11 November.
Join our expert to find out what is edible and what is not!!

Autumn Colour Tours at 1pm
Tuesday 23 October, Tuesday 6 November.
A guided stroll with the curator through the amazing colours.

ADDRESS **Bedale, North Yorkshire DL8 2PR**
WEBSITE **www.thorpperrow.com**
TEL **01677 425323**

6. WINTERBOURNE HOUSE AND GARDEN



This 7-acre Arts and Crafts garden offers delightful autumn colour. Look out for *Cercidiphyllum*, *Parrotia persica*, *Liquidambar*, *Acer palmatum* and *Euonymus*. Alongside the plant collections a pleasant tea room, house exhibition rooms and quality gift shop complete this lovely attraction. Open daily.

ADDRESS **Edgbaston Park Road, Birmingham B15 2RT**
WEBSITE **www.winterbourne.org.uk**
TEL **0121 414 3003**

7. ABBEYWOOD GARDENS

An exciting all-season garden in the heart of Cheshire. Rare and unusual woodland plants in Jane's Garden. Long flowering naturalistically planted herbaceous borders in the Main Gardens. Exciting and vibrantly planted Christopher Lloyd inspired Exotic Garden. A young Arboretum with interesting evergreen and deciduous trees. New and mature woodlands with a 2km nature walk.

ADDRESS **Chester Road, Delamere, Cheshire CW8 2HS**
WEBSITE **www.abbeywoodgardenscheshire.co.uk**
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8. OLD COURT NURSERIES

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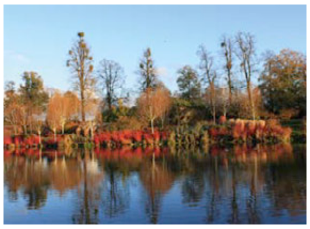
ADDRESS **Walwyn Road, Colwall, Nr Malvern WR13 6QE**
WEBSITE **www.autumnasters.co.uk** TEL **01684 540416**

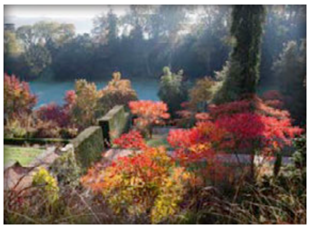
9. MARKS HALL



Marks Hall Gardens and Arboretum near Coggeshall provides a great day out for the whole family. Wonderful woodland walks, a delightful children-friendly walled garden, lovely lakes and trees and amazing plants from around the world. We have a Visitor Centre for refreshments and a shop for retail therapy too.

ADDRESS **Coggeshall, Essex CO6 1TG**
WEBSITE **www.markshall.org.uk**
TEL **01376 563796**

10. POWIS CASTLE AND GARDEN



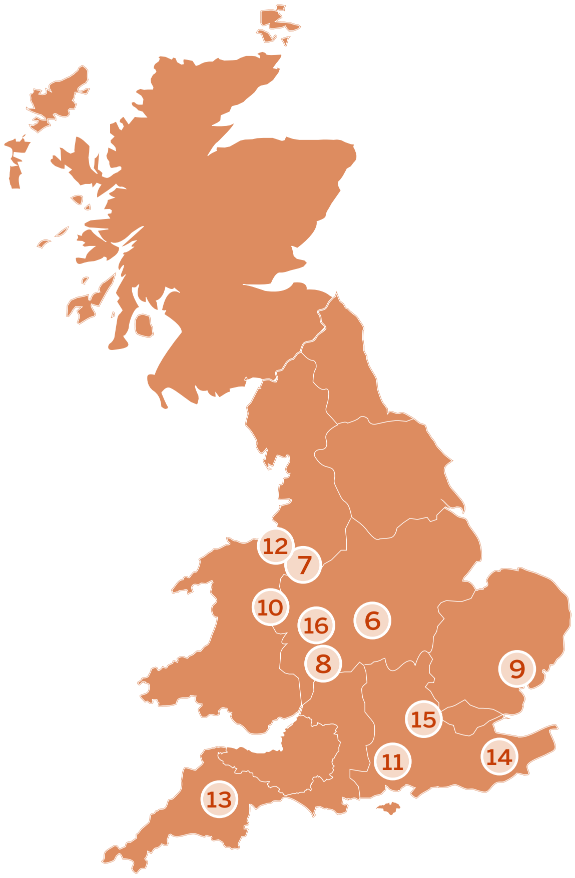
Dusky pink Powis Castle looks at its best on bright autumn days and the gardens around it are equally special at this time of year. Look out for the voluminous clipped yews and elegant planted terraces that contrast beautifully with the bronzes, browns and golds of the woodland wilderness.

ADDRESS **Welshpool, Wales SY21 8RF**
WEBSITE **www.nationaltrust.org.uk/powis-castle/**
TEL **01938 551929**

11. SIR HAROLD HILLIER GARDENS

For late summer colour visit the redesigned Centenary Border, set to be an iconic feature of the gardens. Our arboretum collection, which includes 300 Champion trees, ensures a dazzling display of autumn colour. 'Art in the Garden' sculpture exhibition runs until 28 October. Excellent restaurant and Tea Rooms.

ADDRESS **Jermyns Lane, Romsey, Hampshire SO51 0QA**
WEBSITE **www.hilliergardens.org.uk**
TEL **01794 369317/318**

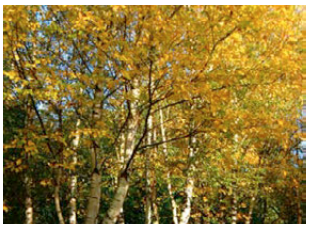


12. NESS BOTANIC GARDENS

The superb gardens at Ness on the Wirral Peninsula overlooking the Dee Estuary; open all year around except Christmas Day & Boxing Day. Enjoy the award-winning Roses Tea Rooms for a truly memorable garden lover's culinary experience and a perfect day out!

ADDRESS **Ness, Neston, Cheshire CH64 4AY**
WEBSITE **www.nessgardens.org.uk**
TEL **0151 353 0123**

13. STONE LANE GARDENS



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ADDRESS **Chagford, Devon TQ13 8JU**
WEBSITE **www.stonelanegardens.com**
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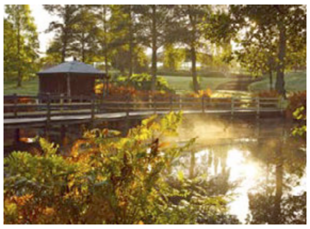

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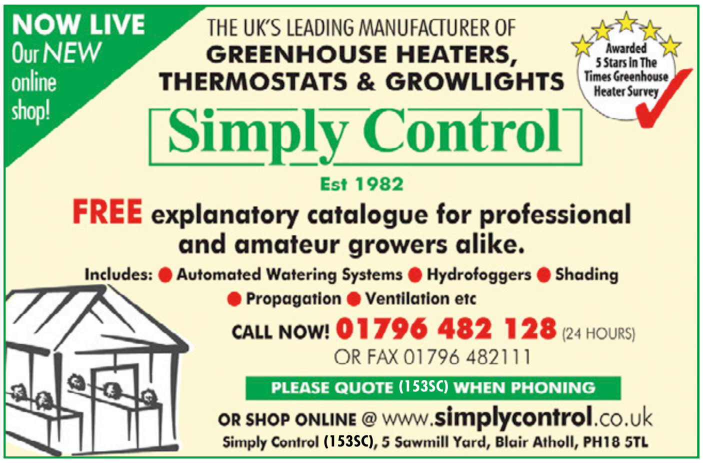
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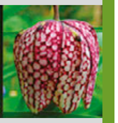

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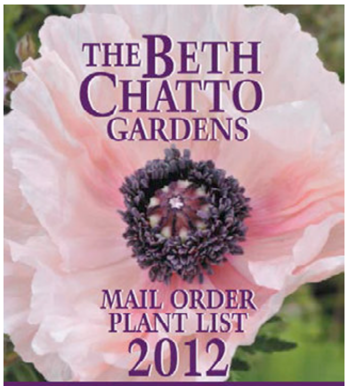

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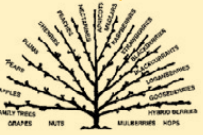

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CAROLE DRAKE

the writer's plot

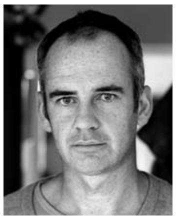
A soft spot for weaklings

Pet plants are being smothered, so our columnist takes action – but will they survive his pampering?

WORDS **FRANK RONAN** ILLUSTRATION **ANGELA HARDING**

Pets' corner is up and running. It is a new bed, triangular and raised, about 12 feet on the hypotenuse, shaded by a north-facing wall of brick and beam. Previous refuges had been designated for pets and some had flourished briefly, but they were always the corners of larger beds and then the roughs and the tumblers would sidle in and if the pets weren't squeezed to death they were overshadowed into invisibility. This bastion is isolated from the bullies and the cads by a broad stone path and so the pets can get on with their refined existence at a safe distance.

Nor will any self sowing be tolerated from without the perimeter. No smothering forget-me-nots or louring teasles. Nothing in this bed is to be left to chance, even in the interests of charm. Some fairly choice hellebores have been put in there, but even their babies will be wrenched away. Any pet that relishes the conditions so much that it looks like taking over will be demoted and removed. This space is for exquisite weaklings only.



Frank Ronan is a novelist who lives and gardens in Worcestershire

The queue of prospective tenants had been growing steadily over the years. Many had died in the waiting while others grew feebler from a potted existence. That was brought to my attention with something like violence this spring when I saw a mature and ebullient *Podophyllum pleianthum* in someone else's pets' corner (one that was swathed in black netting, which seems extreme to me, no matter what the results) and came home to look for my own specimen, acquired seven years before. For the first two of those years I had cosseted it while I tried to think of a place in the garden it could be trusted to and then over the ensuing five it slid backwards towards death row and the sort of obscurity reserved for plants that are too good for me. The stalwart remains of it became the first thing to be assigned to the shining optimism of the new bed.

I knew someone who adopted a bereaved parrot and, having done their research, fed it all the correct things. Within a month it was dead, and the examining vet concluded that it had been unable to cope with seeds and nuts, having existed for most of its life on Victoria sponge. I strongly suspect that my *Podophyllum* and one or two other things may have the same reaction to their ideal conditions, having spent so long adapting to adversity. There will be a lot of nervous poking in the spring, some of which will, inevitably, snap off the one shoot that is being hoped for.

Angela Harding

"Any pet that relishes the conditions so much that it looks like taking over will be demoted and removed"

At least that *Podophyllum* was one that I bought myself, and no-one need know if I buy another and a third to replace it. A much more difficult category of plants are the irreplaceably rare that come as nerve-racking presents. My friend Helen came the other day with a whole box of them, the most extreme, delightful and terrifying of which was an *Athyrium filix-femina* 'Caput Medusae', the lady fern that looks more like parsley than the parsley fern and is so superior that the books of the fern experts are no help at all: Reginald Kaye implying that it ought to be kept in a frame while Martin Rickard casts doubt on its very existence. I stared at it for a fortnight before taking a profound breath and laying it gently in pets' corner with a honeyed trowel.

That is the point of such a place in the garden. If a plant won't do there it won't do anywhere and so to plant in it will be to clear my conscience. No more guilty hunching of the shoulders as I scurry past the declining cypripediums for me. Their welfare, from now on, will be their own concern. My only contribution is to sit on their retaining wall and admire and perhaps sprinkle a little leaf-mould around the flourishing crowns. There are few pleasures as sweet as these foolish expectations. □

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